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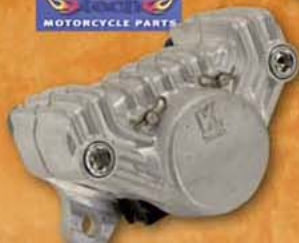
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## 46 THIS MONTH'S COVER BIKE

P&D Customs on the road again with 'Panned Heat'.

# FEATURED BIKES



26

## 14 DUCATI 900SS

Old Empire Motorcycles and their big wind.

## 26 THE BLACK PEARL

Full steam ahead! ('Full compressed air' just doesn't sound the same).

## 38 TRIUMPH T140

Street is neat but track is where it's at.

## 58 DENVER'S CHOPPERS

A look back at one of the pioneers of custom building.

## 64 KAWASAKI ZR-7

Black, white and blue.

## 72 HONDA CX500

The Maggot that turned.

## 86 BOBBER BUILD - THE END

And this is what Gareth's bobber shed build looks like!

14



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## EDITORIAL

**We are lucky enough in this country to have a publicly funded health care system which is free at the point of use to any UK resident. But, with a population of 65 million, it is a service under constant pressure.**

Thus we are equally fortunate that there are also people prepared to give up their time and money to provide corollary services to the NHS. The one that will spring to most minds is, of course, the fantastic Air Ambulance. However, just as valuable but perhaps less visible are the Blood Bikes organisations across the country.

One of the largest 'unseen' costs of the NHS is that of transporting blood, x-rays, scans, tissue samples and the like. After office hours, the only option is to use private taxis and couriers, which is hugely expensive. This is where the Blood Bikes come into their own. Started in 1969, this service has saved the NHS millions of pounds over the years, thanks to the indefatigable work of volunteers. Across the country, hundreds of bikers give up their time each week to ensure that people get the best health care possible. Every single night and weekend of the year, across the country, there are Blood Bikes out there, saving both lives and money for the NHS, and this is all done on a voluntary basis. Like the Air Ambulance, Blood Bikes rely solely on charitable donations for everything, even for fuel and insurance.

As well as couriering items between hospitals, the Blood Bikes also work in conjunction with local Air Ambulance services. Until recently, Air Ambulances were unable to carry blood supplies and it was frequently a Blood Bike which could get to the scene of an accident in the quickest time. Now Blood Bikes deliver blood to many helicopters, enabling them to be en route to an incident as quickly as possible.

All riders hold an advanced riding qualification and receive extra training in emergency response riding, but they give their time for free, and frequently help to finance the service themselves. As well as the motorcycle riders, each team also has a dispatcher and other helpers, all - once again - doing this on a purely voluntary basis, week after week. Saving lives. Week after week.

It's a remarkable and essential service, and one which you can help while having a damn good time. The Prescott Bike Festival near Cheltenham on 12th April is a vital fundraiser for the National Association of Blood Bikes and the local group, the Severn Freewheelers. It's a chance for you to find out what the Blood Bikes do from the people on the front line, and you'll be helping fund-raising simply by paying your ticket price and enjoying the day. Please support the event, because one day you might have cause to be thankful to Blood Bikes for more than just a good day out.

[www.prescottbikefestival.co.uk](http://www.prescottbikefestival.co.uk)

**BLUE**

## 22 BRIGHTONA

A day out at the seaside. It's good for your health.

THIS MONTH'S  
**FEATURED EVENT**  
SEE PAGE 22

# THIS ISSUE'S OTHER STUFF



62

## 8 NEWS

News, views and cockatoos.

## 12 PRODUCTS

Quite light on the cockatoos.

## 20 BIKER GEAR

Cockatoo-free zone. Phew.

## 32 CUSTOMBIKE

From the biggest custom motorcycle fair in the world.

## 44 BIKES AND BIKERS

Making merry in Matlock.

## 54 VMCC NEW YEAR RUN

Laidback in Leyland. And that's just Odgie...

## 62 NOTTS CUSTOM SHOW

Raleigh saying something.

## 76 CUSTOMFEST

Bikes, beer, bouncy castles and paella. Heaven.



76

## 81 SHEDHEAD

In which Blackjack gets his tool correctly orientated.

## 88 EVENTS

Everything you need to know for everywhere you want to go.

## 94 BIKE JUMBLE

It's all got to go, you know!

## 96 MAG COLUMN

Mitch takes on an electoral role.

## 98 TAILPIECE

News from the front. Well, news from the back, to be precise.





# KICKBACK LAST CALL

**There's just days to go before Kickback: The National Custom Bike Show, so here's a quick round up of just a few of the many attractions that will be coming to Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire at the end of the month**

First and foremost is, of course, the custom show itself which comprises the Custom Bike Building National Championships, a competition for all custom bike engineers, designers, fabricators and builders to show off their talents on a national platform. There are five categories for the mainly 'non-pro' competition: Freestyle; The New Generation - Young Builder; Café Bike; Streetfighter/Performance Custom; Best Modern Triumph and Street Cub.

As we went to print, there were still a limited number of show places left, so email [lorne@rww.co.uk](mailto:lorne@rww.co.uk) immediately for your chance to enter your bike. The organisers of Kickback are very proud to announce that the judging panel for the Custom Bike Building National Championships will consist of the most respected, talented and influential custom motorcycle builders and industry professionals in the UK. That panel will include many of the UK's top builders in the form of Larry Houghton of Lamb Engineering, Pete Pearson of Rocket Bobs, Paul Milbourn, Wade Poulson of Sickboyz Customs and Shaun Walker of Down and Out Café Racers, as well as former BSH editor Stu Garland, WWB editor Dave Manning and our own Blue.

Krazy Horse Cycles will be bringing a showcase of its stunning Zero Engineering Samurai Choppers, while there will also be a chance to see a collection of builds by Down and Out Café Racers, currently considered as one of the best café racer workshops in Europe. There's the opportunity to have a close look at Lamb Engineering's brand new 'The Circus of Speed' Triumph, making its debut in a non-competition setting, while Triumph Motorcycles itself will be curating a showcase of modern Hinckley customs.

Outside, Ash and Vandal of Two Brothers Stunt Team will be performing regular jaw-dropping shows and the

entire weekend will be filmed for the forthcoming The Motorbike Show on ITV4.

There will also be evening entertainment on Saturday evening, with music starting in the afternoon and continuing into the night. The line-up includes Stone Donkey Pilots whose blues, rock and folk blend has played on the same bill as the likes of Van Morrison, Seasick Steve and KT Tunstall; punk metal band Scripted Youth; rockers Paragon and Krankschaft, a band started by Hawkwind's Robert Calvert and which still features original guitarist Steve Pond.

Tickets for the event are just £15 for a weekend pass (which includes live bands and entertainment on Saturday night) or £10 for a Sunday day ticket. It's a fiver for under-sixteens, while children under five get in free if they're accompanied by an adult. Camping is available at Stoneleigh for £8 per night (or an extra £2 a night if you want an electric hook-up) and can be booked by ringing 02476 696969, while, if camping in March seems like a ridiculous notion, there's a number of hotels and B&Bs situated within a few miles of the site. Kickback will take place at Stoneleigh Park from 28-29th March 2015. For more information, to buy tickets or to enter your bike or trike in the show, visit [www.thecustomshow.com](http://www.thecustomshow.com), email [lorne@rww.co.uk](mailto:lorne@rww.co.uk) or ring 07758 368072.



## FENLAND CHOPPERS MOVE

**Fenland Choppers is on the move to bigger and better workshops**

As of 1st April 2015, the chaps can now be found plying their trade in all things custom at Unit 3 Venture Court, Boleness Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2XQ.

## AUTUMN NABDNES CANCELLED

**As you find out when you turn to Rick Hulse's Tailpiece at the end of this issue,** Autumn Nabdness has been cancelled for this year due to problems with the site. Boo! However, it will be returning in 2016. Hurrah!

## TAKING CHARGE

**Last issue we brought you news of Polaris's acquisition of Brammo's electric motorcycle business, with the question, when would we see the first electric-powered Indian or Victory**

Now it seems that Polaris has already registered the name 'Victory Charger' with the USPTO (United States Patent and Trademark Office). Before its purchase, Brammo had already announced an 'eCruiser' in the upcoming launch section of its web site and it now appears entirely likely that that development will continue as an electric Victory cruiser.

Of even more interest is the possibility that Victory could beat Harley-Davidson to market with an electric bike. Harley's much-trumpeted Project Livewire is primarily dependent on parts from Mission Motors, a company which is struggling financially. Of course, there's the option that Harley could buy Mission Motors, as Polaris did with Brammo. And, while Victory Charger is a strong and clever name, with its pun on electricity, we are wondering quite what Dodge will have to say about it... [Blue]

## BIKERS ONLY

**Following recent research which found that motorcyclists' knowledge of road safety was almost twice as good as that of car drivers, specialist insurance brokers Carole Nash has now launched a car policy called 'Bikers Only'**

Starting from the premise that motorcyclists need by necessity to be more aware of road hazards and therefore make more alert and safer road users, Carole Nash is now guaranteeing not simply to match, but to beat, bikers' car insurance renewal quotes (subject to conditions).

Open to any biker aged between 35-75 who holds both a full bike and car licence, irrespective of whether they own a bike, you can find full details of Carole Nash's 'Bikers Only Car Insurance' by ringing 0800 144 4646 or visiting [www.carolenash.com](http://www.carolenash.com).





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[www.vjmc.com](http://www.vjmc.com) – A wealth of information, even to the non-VJMC member.

[www.facebook.com/bikermagazine](http://www.facebook.com/bikermagazine) – Yes, a heads up to our own Facebook page which has loads of fine, exclusive and random stuff

# Spruce Goose

I forgot to mention in our feature on Dan's Triumph Bonneville T120 in 100% Biker #191

(Hang Loose Blu'Goose) that, due to a growing pile of projects – that's actually got bigger since I photographed the Bonnie – the chop could be up for sale for the right price. If you're serious about it being the bike for you, give Dan a call on **07810 447178**.

# HORSE TRADING

Indian Motorcycle has just unveiled the latest addition to the Indian Chief line-up, and its first new 2016 model. Behold the Dark Horse

The Indian Chief Dark Horse is a cruiser built upon the successful Chief platform but the company appears to have recruited Batman as part of its styling team because the Dark Horse has been almost completely blacked out. Chrome has been all but eliminated and the tankers carrying matte black paint have been rolling into the Spirit Lake, Iowa, factory.

Powered by the Thunder Stroke 111 engine and with the same chassis and suspension as the Chief, the Dark Horse now has cast wheels and is also the lightest of the Indian Chief family. A large accessory range of some 40 components will be rolled out in spring, and it's clear that Indian sees this as a model that will attract those riders who want to add their own touch. There will even be options

to dispense with what little chrome the standard Dark Horse sports. Although built as a solo ride, passenger seats and foot boards are available as part of the Genuine Indian Motorcycle Accessory range.

Unusually the Dark Horse was shown in Europe just one day after it was unveiled to the public in Chicago, although there's no word as yet when it will reach UK dealerships. A UK price tag also hasn't been revealed, although we're betting on something in the region of £16,500. A lot cheaper than a Batmobile... [Blue]



## RD Custombikes

RD Custombikes is the sole UK distributor of American-made Joker Machine aftermarket billet parts

The 'R' and 'D' of the company name are Ricky Wells and Dan Giffard, both of whom have a wealth of experience in and on motorcycles. As well as professionally racing speedway (this year for Wolverhampton Wolves), Ricky used to work for Joker Machine, while Dan is also an ex-speedway rider and now works as a mechanic for a race team.

Joker Machine sells a wide range of parts not only, as you would expect for Harleys, but also for Triumph and café racer parts for Honda, Kawasakis and Yamahas (and even speedway bikes – JM is one of Ricky's sponsors). The Arizona company wanted a sole distributor in this country and RD Custombikes seemed like the perfect fit. Ricky and Dan have spent the last year researching and finding a range of parts which they feel will be popular in the UK and you can see some of that stock for yourself at Kickback at Stoneleigh Park where the guys will be taking a stand, or at [www.rdcustombikes.com](http://www.rdcustombikes.com). [Blue]

## Yorkshire Pudding dates

This year, the Yorkshire Pudding is moving from its established August slot to one week earlier

This is due to the venue, once again the popular Escrick Park, accidentally double booking the weekend. The Yorkshire Pudding will be held this year on 31st July-2nd August, which is ideal if you wanted to go to the Rock and Bike at Squires Café Bar or the Bulldog Bash at Avon Park Raceway on the second weekend of August and were going to have to make a difficult choice. Don't forget that entry to the Yorkshire Pudding is by prebooked ticket only. There will be no tickets on the gate so it's no good turning up and looking hopeful or pathetic, because it won't work. Instead, take yourself off to [www.farmyardparty.com/yorkshire-pudding](http://www.farmyardparty.com/yorkshire-pudding) and get those tickets bought now! [Blue]

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## BEHIND THE MASK

**Bike masks come in a variety of designs and material, but now a French company has given this humble face covering a new twist with a mask that it says 'blends retro chic with gentleman farmer and biker café racer.' Well, that covers most moods you might be in**

Böken was started by Boris Moretti and Christian Moret last year when they realised that they wanted durable and comfortable protection from the cold and flying debris while wearing open face helmets. Despite having different tastes in motorcycles – Boris has always ridden older bikes and now favours bratstyle and café racer-inspired bikes, while Christian is more into modern motorcycles – they collaborated on a new mask design in

leather, aimed at being completely different than anything else in face protection. It's a bit vintage racer, a bit Jason Voorhees, but they discovered that other people liked the idea. They decided to launch it as a product using the name Böken, which is Japanese for adventure, something, they say, which links every biker on the planet. Each mask is handmade and you can find more details by visiting [www.boken-style.com](http://www.boken-style.com). [Blue]



## WIN DOUBLE TROUBLE TICKETS

Thanks to the generosity of Sindy and Dom, we have two pairs of tickets (worth £40 a pair) to give away to the ever-excellent Double Trouble Rally at Court Farm Country Park, Wolvershill Road, Banwell, Somerset BS29 6DL

This is an event of which our very own Rod Lawless said, 'It's just one of those rallies that doesn't let you down' and as he's been to about a million rallies, he should know. There will be a huge indoor bar, trophies, hog roast, tattooist, after-hours beer tent, campfire and live music from four bands, plus it's in a farm park and just five minutes ride from the beach. All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning tickets to this fine event is to tell us in which county the Double Trouble Rally is held and then send the answer along with your name and address to [editor@100-biker.com](mailto:editor@100-biker.com).

## Musket Firing On All Two

**Fifteen years ago, a young man called Aniket Vardhan saw a Harley. There weren't many Harleys in his home town of Delhi and he fell in love with the sight and sound of the Milwaukee bike on the spot**

At the time, he was studying architecture and riding, like many of his countrymen, a Royal Enfield Bullet. So he came up with the idea that he would build a V-twin Enfield. As you do. Three years later he found himself working at a college in America and, on a trip back to Delhi in 2003, he picked up his old Enfield engine and took it back with him to the USA.

For the next two years, he spent all his spare time working out how to create a V-twin using only standard Enfield parts. Although, to his chagrin, he found other people had had the same idea, he developed a V-twin based on two 350cc engines. He did indeed use as many original components as possible, although he had to make a new crankcase, sandcasting it himself. Quickly he found that many other people liked his 700cc Musket as well, and he put the new Vee motor into limited production.

Then he started work on a new engine, based on the 500cc Enfield single – or two of them, to be accurate. The result was a 59-degree 998cc V-twin, which Aniket described as "an absolute beast". This wasn't just building a motor with Enfield parts – it is basically an entirely new engine with crankcase, cylinders, connecting rods, barrels and crankshaft designed and made by Aniket. And,

after so many years of testing, building and dreaming, the very first Musket motorcycle, weighing just 420lbs, was delivered to the customer a couple of months ago. The customer, who Aniket hasn't named, is a retired motorcycle journalist and experienced builder, who also owns a Vincent and two Fueling W3s. How did the Musket compare to those? He says; "In this modern age when most large displacement motorcycles weigh in at 600 to 1000 pounds or more, the Musket is a breath of fresh air. Its tasteful functionality and spectacular performance harkens back to the illustrious mid-20th century heyday of big engine kick-start British sporting motorcycles, like the Vincent Black Shadow, Royal Enfield Interceptor and the Triumph/BSA Triples. In this hall of Fame, the Musket will surely take its place. It is the best of the old and the new. Ride the Musket and you are contributing a new chapter to the legacy."

References don't get much better than that, and now Aniket is taking orders for Muskets. Look at that lovely engine, and you can imagine that he is going to be a very busy man. You can see the process of building the engine as well as read Aniket's engaging commentary at [www.musketvtwin.com](http://www.musketvtwin.com). [Blue]





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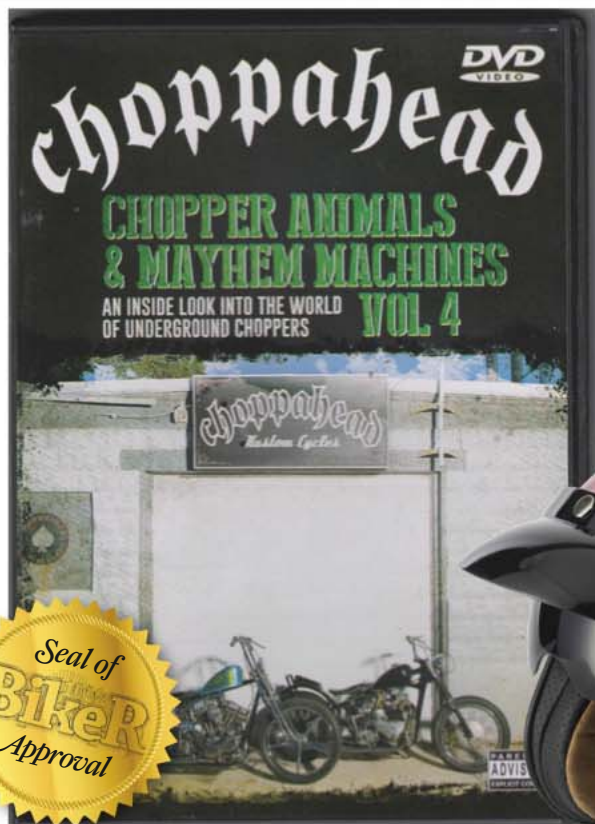


# All new Biker Products

## CHOPPAHEAD 4

Choppahead Kustoms was started as a shop in Massachusetts by Big Truth in 2000 with his partner in crime, Jay, joining a year later. Becoming known for their neat Triumph customs—ahead of the curve when the prevailing fashion was still for big bucks Harleys—along the way they were also keeping a record of the chopper scene, the bikes, the events, the people, with the first Choppahead DVD released in 2005. Volumes 2 and 3 swiftly followed before the guys focused back on building.

Now, four years later, Choppahead Vol 4 is out and it's our favourite so far. There's no moody hipster film-making, no loving shots of roller doors being opened or cigarettes lit. This is real. It mixes run footage with shows and interviews, as well as a longer piece with Chopper Dave. Some of the cut scenes are a bit *Masters of Menace* meets *Jackass* with an element of 'you had to be there', but at over two hours long (plus bonus footage), there's more than enough for your money. You can buy the DVD through [www.choppertown.com](http://www.choppertown.com) for £12.92 (plus £8.33 P&P) or download it for just £6.47.



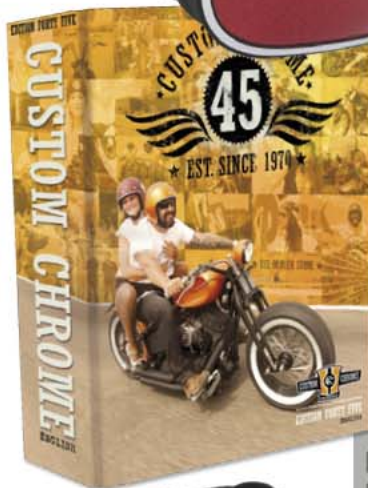
## VCAN V537 CANDY FLAKE

New from Vcan Helmets is this rather fancy open face job with a three stud removable helmet peak. It has a luxury faux suede lining harvested from free range faux suedes that lived a long and happy life before dying of old age, a drop down sun visor, a ratchet-type chinstrap system and a retention strap for keep your googles in place. It comes in a nice spangly red candy flake finish and is available in sizes XS-XL. Best of all, it will cost you just £69.99. For information, visit [www.vcanhelmets.co.uk](http://www.vcanhelmets.co.uk).



## CUSTOM CHROME CATALOGUE

While online shopping is one of the most wonderful things ever invented by man, you can't replace the pleasure of having a weighty catalogue to flick through. And they don't come much weightier than Custom Chrome Europe's 45th tome. Tipping the scales at around 10lb, the 2015 edition has 1,480 pages with pictures and details of some 28,000 products (3,000 of which are new for this year). CCE will continually update their website throughout the year, where a PDF version will be available, but that's just not the same as a proper book, is it? And it will probably cost you far more in printer ink. Instead, hand over a tenner to your local CCE dealer—which you can find at [www.custom-chrome-europe.com](http://www.custom-chrome-europe.com)—and settle back for a damn fine peruse!



## DIORA COMBAT BOOT

Diora Boots has just launched this new combat boot, designed specifically with motorcyclists in mind. It meets all the requirements of a biker boot, with a Hipora waterproof and breathable membrane inside to keep your feet comfortable and your boots from needing to be quarantined after a day's ride. There's added protection in the ankle, reinforced toe and heel areas and double-stitching in high stress areas. The front laces up, but there's a half-length side zip to make getting the boots on and off quick and easy. Available in sizes 7-13 and any colour you like as long as it's black. For details, visit [www.dioraboos.co.uk](http://www.dioraboos.co.uk).



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# THE TYPHOON

**I have been watching the progress of Old Empire Motorcycles with interest for a number of years and never more so as the East Anglian company launches the first build in what it terms its Imperial Collection**

 **WORDS:** BLUE **PHOTOS:** RICHARD STOW







**T**he Imperial Collection is designed to differ from OEM's other builds in one particular way which can be summed up in just two words: no compromise. Unlike customer builds, Alec Sharp and Rafe Pugh of OEM are allowing themselves complete free rein on just one or maybe two projects a year. They say: "The Imperial Collection showcases the motorcycles we are able to build ourselves without compromise. We don't build from a predetermined layout or to a set time scale, but let

the design develop organically as the build progresses."

Now, building organically is one of those concepts that sounds very well when written down or said fast, but, in reality, it can lead to horrendous disaster or, as many people have found, absolutely nowhere when you realise that it just isn't going to work. How many of you have got so far into a build and then encountered a problem which means that you have to take several steps back and rethink (and frequently rework) what you've already done?

However, Alec approached the project with the intention of showcasing the original donor bike, working with the bike instead of around it to show it off rather than make it fit a certain idea.

Even the donor bike was hardly what might seem an obvious choice for a custom bike in the shape of a 1995 Ducati 900SS. However, OEM has never shied away from the path less taken; the company built its reputation on Royal Enfield builds, which have been followed by the Yamaha TR1 'Bulldog', a Kawasaki W650





**BUILDING ORGANICALLY IS ONE OF THOSE CONCEPTS THAT SOUNDS VERY WELL WHEN WRITTEN DOWN OR SAID FAST, BUT, IN REALITY, IT CAN LEAD TO HORRENDOUS DISASTER**



'Merlin' (The Merlin, 100% Biker #185), a Honda 250 SuperDream (Night of the Hunter, 100% Biker #179), while there are designs afoot featuring a Hinckley Triumph engine and a Victory motor. Not in the same motorcycle, of course. That would be madness.

And so, for the next 18 months, Alec worked on the Ducati, already codenamed the 'Typhoon', as and when he had time or when inspiration struck him. It was, he admits, a very pleasurable way of working. "I want the Imperial builds to go back to why I enjoy building custom motorcycles," he said. "The process of being able to take my time and piece together the build bit by bit was, by far, the most enjoyable aspect of the build."

The trellis frame is an instantly







## IF THIS BIKE CAN BE SLOTTED INTO ANY GENRE, THEN BOARD TRACK RACER IS PROBABLY THE MOST COMFORTABLE FIT

recognisable trait of the Italian marque, but although it might appear to be mainly Ducati, the Typhoon's chassis has been heavily modified. It bears a familial relation to the original as far back as the open clutch, after which things become very different to accommodate a rigid rear subframe. Siamesed fuel tanks were fabricated to sit on top of the frame while the seat unit is impressively radical. Instead of making the seating position lower and incorporating it into the frame, the saddle is suspended from a new top tube which bisects the petrol tanks and supported from below by a tube which arcs beneath the seat. It looks curious at first glance, although it makes sense when you see the Typhoon complete with rider.

At the front, Alec built a set of girder forks which is a thing

of beauty in itself. Two friction dampers control a spring, adjustments being made with brass wing nuts. If this bike can be slotted into any genre, then board track racer is probably the most comfortable fit, although board track racing if it had been invented in the middle of the 19th century, rather than the early 20th. The handmade handlebars are pure board track with their downward stance and inverted levers.

Despite the use of brass fitments, the Typhoon manages, however, to avoid the clichés of the steam punk movement. The use of the finish has been kept to deft touches like the headlight and the gauges, the latter custommade when OEM couldn't find any that they were happy to fit to the bike. The original idea that Alec and Rafe had was that they wanted





## SPECIFICATION SHEET

### Engine:

1995 Ducati 900SS V2, twin Amal GP3 carburettors, custom fuel lines, taps and filters, custom stainless exhaust system by Old Empire Motorcycles.

### Frame:

Ducati chrome moly trellis frame, heavily modified by OEM.

### Front end:

21" wheel, quad leading shoe drum brake, Avon Roadrider tyre, custom girder forks, OEM handlebars, custom speedo and tachometer, micro switches, stainless inverted levers, custom brass headlight with handmade shroud.

### Rear end:

21" wheel, single leading shoe drum brake, Avon Roadrider tyre, pressed black and silver number plate.

### Miscellaneous:

Custom twin tanks with knee pads, bevel gear throttle, handmade rear sets, leather battery satchel, leather electrics pouches, custom single to twin pull switches, one-off braided wiring loom, pull-type starter.

### Thanks to:

"Black Shuck Kustoms; Demeanour Customs; Jake Robbins Vintage Engineering; Ekquire Motorcycles; Amal carburettors; Framingham Motorcycles; Alloy Polishing Services; MP Sodablasting; Morley Brothers; Specialised Polishing Services; Avon Tyres; Chris Tullett Exhausts; Moto Phoenix; So Low Choppers; gaugerepairs.com; Venhill Cables; Auto Electric Supply; Morris oils and Seastar Superbikes"



**THE DONOR BIKE WAS HARDLY WHAT MIGHT SEEM AN OBVIOUS CHOICE FOR A CUSTOM BIKE IN THE SHAPE OF A 1995 DUCATI 900SS. HOWEVER, OEM HAS NEVER SHIED AWAY FROM THE PATH LESS TAKEN**

to produce, in their own words, "a motorcycle that goes back to the very fundamentals of two-wheeled travel". In that there is, of course, an element of nostalgia for Britain's golden age of engineering (even though opinions may differ as to when exactly that was). However, despite using a comparatively new engine, Alec has managed to build a motorcycle that wouldn't look out of place at a boardtrack meeting in 1919 or parked at Brooklands in 1931 or even outside your local pub last night. And there's a chance that it could certainly have been

at the last—many miles were put under the wheels of the Typhoon before it went to a new owner (Alec and Rafe may enjoy the idea of building without compromise, but if someone wants to buy that motorcycle, then they'll happily roll with that). Alec admits that you probably wouldn't want to go touring on it unless you had a very wide masochistic streak, but reports that it handles very well, is ridiculously fast and is best ridden at speed. You can take the Ducati out of the Ducati, but you can't take the Ducati out of the Typhoon. Or something like that... ☒



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# Biker Gear

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Just spray it all over to penetrate, lubricate and create a barrier against road grime and salt with the added bonus that it then makes washing your bike easier and quicker. Like any product of this nature, don't—repeat, don't—use it on your tyres or brakes. Or your eyes. Obviously. For details and stockists, visit [www.acf-50.com](http://www.acf-50.com).

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## Biker Gear

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WORDS &amp; PHOTOS: BOSUN

# BRIGHTONA

## MADEIRA DRIVE, BRIGHTON, EAST SUSSEX

Autumn, that season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, as John Keats wrote. The trouble is, it's often a time of chest infections, too, and Casa 100% was not spared. Blue coughed down the phone at me something that I took to mean, 'Are you well enough to go to Brightona?'

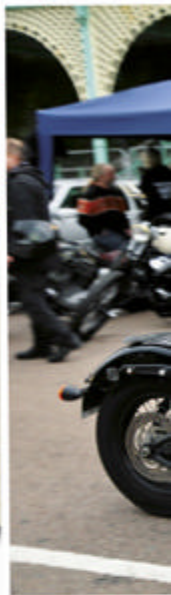
In response, I coughed almost hard enough to lose a lung, and then I croaked, "Yes". Brightona is one of those events that I try not to miss and I wasn't going to stop anything other than imminent death from me getting there. Now in its 11th year, I've been at nine of those events, which is testament in itself to how much I enjoy it.

Brightona was started by Abby Gouldin in 2003. Abby, who'd suffered a heart attack as a relatively young man, wanted to raise money for the Royal Sussex County Hospital to purchase specialist equipment that the NHS couldn't provide. Since then, Brightona has raised thousands of pounds for the Brighton Heart Charity, all through the £5 charity donations from visitors to the show. Although it's a voluntary donation, the collection point is cunningly placed at the

best vantage point to watch bikes arriving.

And arrive they did. Choppers, trikes, classics, stock bikes, learner bikes and every other version of two or three-wheeled transportation you could imagine. Even the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton, Councillor Brian and Mrs Norah Fitch, arrived by bike, albeit being chauffeured rather than under their own steam. But the Lady Mayoress appeared to be rather enjoying her pillion ride aboard Abby's own Harley trike as they followed the Tubthumpers, a band of manic drummers which seems to have dozens of members. The Mayor arrived on the back of a Road King, with some wag having provided him with a splendid chrome helmet to wear.

Madeira Drive was closed off to all but motorcycles for the day. Ever since this bit of land was reclaimed from the sea in the nineteenth century—efforts to







**THE LADY MAYORESS APPEARED TO BE RATHER ENJOYING HER PILLION RIDE ABOARD ABBY'S OWN HARLEY TRIKE**





## BRIGHTONA HAS RAISED THOUSANDS OF POUNDS FOR THE BRIGHTON HEART CHARITY, ALL THROUGH THE £5 CHARITY DONATIONS FROM VISITORS TO THE SHOW

protect the cliff face created a foundation on which a road could be built and Victorian engineers did just that—it has been a venue for all type of vehicles and motoring events. And, although the road is quite a length, it was crammed with bikes and trikes (and, admittedly, one or two hot rods and custom cars that had sneaked in).

Among the attractions was the Harrison Billet-sponsored custom show, set up in a marquee on the sea side of the road. 100% Biker were pleased to be sponsoring Best Trike and Best Chop and, although, from her sickbed, Blue had put my name forward for the job, I wasn't asked to judge. Mind you, I wasn't all that unhappy at that omission because it would have been a tough job and I'd probably have run away! Although the main day itself (Sunday is the culmination of three days of Brightona) was blessed with sunshine, the week leading up to the event had seen rain and so that may be why there weren't quite as many bikes on display as there might have been. But quantity was compensated by quality with offerings from the likes of Lamb Engineering and Paul Milbourn's gorgeous white Honda XL600 (as seen in 100% Biker #187), fresh from its top-five placing in the AMD World Championship of Custom Bike Building.

Besides the hundreds of bikes lining Madeira Drive, there were merchandise and clubs stands, as well



as live music. The sun gave way to cloudy skies but it didn't dampen anyone's enthusiasm—the Mayor was even seen to have a bit of a dance with his good lady, thoroughly entering into the spirit of the day. But, most importantly of all, Brightona 2014 raised £35,000 for the cardiac department of the Royal Sussex County Hospital, taking the total over the last eleven years to some £180,000. What is a great day out for a lot of people could just change the lives of many others, and that's worth a fiver of anyone's cash. ☘





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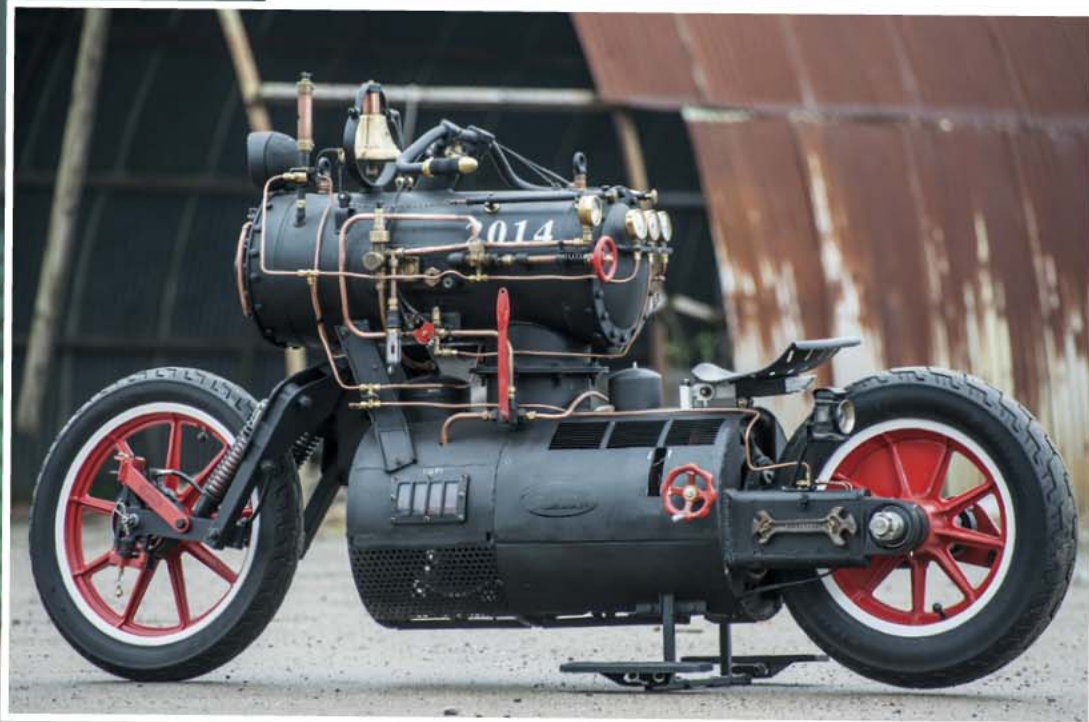
# BLACK PEARL

Few people possess as much creativity as René van Tuil, proprietor of Revatu Customs in the Netherlands, a man who says, “The harder someone says that something is impossible, the more I want to prove that it is possible!”

 WORDS & PHOTOS: FLORIS VELTHUIS







**R**ené's previous builds include his 'Peashooter', based upon a tiny stationary engine, which was then followed by an oversized bike powered by a marine motor. Encouraged by the positive response to those (as well as his ever-increasing trophy cabinet), René pondered on what to build next. The answer was to create a steam bike. As you do.

René explains; "The idea was inspired by a drawing of the American steam-punk artist, Colby Higgins, called 'Train Wreck Bike'. When I saw it, I was really impressed and I thought that it would be cool to build something similar. I learned a bit about steam technology, and I quickly came to the conclusion that it just wasn't feasible. Unfortunately, it would be necessary to meet all kinds of safety requirements and, without permission, I couldn't ride at high steam pressure. So the solution was to switch to compressed air..."

Tight deadlines and working at nights fuelled by coffee and lukewarm Budweiser are nothing new for René. The project started in 2014 when he received, as a gift, a 98cc stationary engine which had originally been intended to power an air compressor. So, with a few months before the Bigtwin

bike show in the Netherlands, René decided to turn up the steam pressure and just go for it! He says; "To start the project, I began looking for a suitable boiler. At a scrapyard I stumbled upon a 60-litre petrol tank from a car, which could hold 30 bar pressure of air. First problem solved!"

A steering column was welded in through the boiler and, with a heavy bracket – for the proper locomotive look – the bottom boiler was fitted. This boiler actually functions as the frame, made of Mercedes wheels mated with a set of heavy and oversized braces. The boiler/frame incorporates the engine which is mounted with anti-vibration rubber. Next to the boiler is suspended a small petrol tank with a sight glass and fitted with the fuel gauge from a saw table. The centre stand is a much modified car jack with floorboards, which are also heavily adapted.

Thick wall tube was used to construct a heavy duty rigid rear subframe which also, behind covers from a Saab toolbox, hides away tools and electrics. Everything had to be fabricated in the strongest possible manner because of the enormous forces generated by the eccentric mechanism. The

**AFTER HIS PEASHOOTER AND HIS MARINE-ENGINED BUILD, RENÉ PONDERED ON WHAT TO BUILD NEXT. THE ANSWER WAS TO CREATE A STEAM BIKE. AS YOU DO**





front forks are of the type, says René, known as 'idiot proof', and they look as if they should be fitted to a sidecar combination.

Showing René's not inconsiderable ingenuity, the front brake was fabricated from a fire extinguisher and a leather tourniquet. "It works like a drum brake, but in reverse," says René. "It slows the bike a little, but don't expect miracles!"

Towards the end of the build, the bike attracted attention from an unexpected source, as he explains. "The Black Pearl was almost finished. Only the most important thing – the air drive – had to be built. So I asked pneumatics specialists, Bus, to help me out with some good quality valve blocks. The next day, the guys from the company came over to my workshop, because they were very, very curious about my creation. And they had good news... They wanted to sponsor the Black Pearl and I could choose the best

valve blocks on the market!"

These valve blocks turn an eccentric rod back and forth on compressed air, while the rear wheel is driven like a steam train.

"Currently, the Black Pearl won't break the sound barrier. 10 kilometres per hour – with a tailwind – and that's about your lot. But that will improve, as the techies of Bus are going to help me out with that."

Riding this mastodon is a real ritual. First the stationary engine has to bring the boiler up to about 10 bar pressure through a compressor pump. There are relief valves, so the boiler will never be over-pressurised or explode. A number of brass meters give the rider all the necessary information, although you should probably undertake an aircraft pilot training course in order to understand what's going on. René then turns to some mysterious levers to get the system working on air pressure. He explains that this is done through a tangle of



**THE PROJECT STARTED WHEN HE RECEIVED A GIFT OF A 98CC STATIONARY ENGINE ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR AN AIR COMPRESSOR**





## RENÉ OFTEN JUST STUMBLED UPON PARTS THAT HE COULD ENVISAGE BEING USED, WHILE MANY ITEMS ARE PRESENTS FROM FRIENDS

copper pressed, steering and control lines. With another lever, the 'drive mode' is activated. With the throttle, he controls the rotation of the rear wheel. Then, the Black Pearl starts to puff and groan and move. It is a beautiful and almost monumental thing to see and hear the Black Pearl roll.

René even invented a mechanical reversing blockade (because with riding on an eccentric mechanism can be a problem), and, while the machine looks huge, it's only a couple of inches longer than a standard Harley Softail. However, as you might expect, it is rather top heavy!

As with his previous creations, René often just stumbled upon parts that he could envisage being used, while many items are gifts from friends, as he tells me; "A customer turned up with the tractor seat. It was a beautiful model, though the edge of the seat was too high and I couldn't get my legs around the large air tank. With pain in my heart, I narrowed the seat. The copper bell was a gift from another customer who had found it at a moped autojumble. The rear light is an old Chinese oil lamp – also a present, which

is wonderful! And the whistle? I found an old steam whistle on the internet. Perfect! So I phoned to ask about the price. 'Well,' said the woman, 'It's an old thing, so I don't need much money for it... It's yours for £4000.' I hung the phone up pretty quickly! Then I remembered the whistles that we used to make out of elderberry stalks when we were kids. I thought that, if it's possible with elderberry, it must be feasible with copper pipe, too... No sooner said than done. The steam whistle works perfectly and it's topped with the cap from a bottle of whiskey."

The Black Pearl is all about the illusion. René made dummy rivets of die waste from the metal industry, just to provide the right train visuals. The coals that light up in the bottom boiler are fake, too, the glow provided by some tea lights, although René says that, at shows, people always touch the viewing glass to see if it's hot!

The problem that René has now is what to build next. He signs; "How do I top this bike? Maybe someone has a plutonium rod available...?" ✖  
*See the Black Pearl on the move on the 100% Biker Facebook page!*



## SPECIFICATION SHEET

### Engine:

98cc stationary engine intended for air compressor, air pressure drive system bus valve blocks.

### Frame:

One-off rigid.

### Front end:

Harley wheel, one-off brake made from a fire extinguisher and leather tourniquet, Dunlop Elite tyre, one-off forks with swingers and Harley Sportster shocks, handlebars by Revatu, Harley-Davidson Heritage headlight.

### Rear end:

Harley wheel, excavator axle, Dunlop Elite tyre, antique Chinese taillight.

### Miscellaneous:

Modified boiler fuel tank, 60-litre air tank made from car fuel tank, modified Harley-Davidson Heritage footboards, Harley grips, adapted tractor seat, modified car jack centre stand, weighs 880lbs.

### Paint and finish:

Matt black, red and white by Revatu.



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WORDS &amp; PHOTOS: BLUE

# CUSTOMBIKE

## MESSEZENTRUM BAD SALZUFLEN, GERMANY

With the rally season having drawn to a close for all but the hardy and/or clinically insane, I decided a nice indoor show would be ideal. Custombike in Germany was, therefore, an excellent choice I felt



I would slap a GB sticker on the back of the truck and set the sat nav for Bad Salzuflen. What could possibly go wrong?

And then, as I sat in the queue for the ferry at Dover, the sat nav lead disintegrated. One minute it was a complete lead in my hand, the next there were bits of plastic and springs and fuses all over the footwell. Now, this is a working truck; it's used for carting about bikes and motorcycle and car parts; it is not particularly tidy. Let's just say that you really don't want to drop anything smaller than a cauliflower on the floor and hope to find it again. Not having a working GPS might not have been a problem if I'd had a backup map. Or a working knowledge of Europe that goes beyond knowing Germany is the other side of Holland. Or if I'd actually looked at a map beforehand.

An investigation of the little shop on the ferry

produced only a European atlas which condensed Germany onto a single page or a road map that folded out to the size of Wales. It was with huge relief I managed to find the French equivalent of Curry's—curiously called Boulanger, which, as you'll remember from your schooldays, means 'baker' in France. Mind you, I suppose it's no odder than a British electrical store being called after a spicy Indian dish. My French isn't fluent, but it was enough to understand the young assistant explaining that he had never seen such a lead (or the remains) and that it had probably been made before he was born. So, dear reader, in the interests of intrepid adventuring and daredevil travelling, I bought a new sat nav.

With harmony and directions restored, I headed east. At least it was vaguely east. Alright, I have no idea, but the woman in the box had, so I reached the show with little further ado. Set-up was almost





complete and my first impression was, 'Hmm, there's going to be a lot of walking this weekend.' Custombike bills itself as 'the world's biggest fair for custom motorcycles' and it ranges over several huge halls, offering everything you could possibly want for a customised bike, from a frame to jewel-like micro switches, courtesy of more than 300 vendors. But the draw for most is the bike show. I did start to count the entries but was distracted, probably by something shiny or a bit of currywurst, so I will have to rely upon Custombike itself, which tells me there were some 800 custom and modified bikes on display. Once I started walking, I found little reason to disbelieve that figure.

I have been to Custombike before and was equally awestruck then by the size and variety of the show. But then fate conspired against me for the next few years and I even missed a British builder—Pete Pearson of Rocket Bobs with 'Gas'd Rat'—winning

**SET-UP WAS ALMOST COMPLETE AND MY FIRST IMPRESSION WAS, 'HMM, THERE'S GOING TO BE A LOT OF WALKING THIS WEEKEND'**





Best of Show in 2013, a first for a builder from the United Kingdom in the show's ten year history. In fact (although I may be wrong), I think that was the only time a British bike has won anything at Custombike although this is due not to partisan judging but to the fact that very few builders make the trip from this sceptred isle. This year, only Rocket Bobs of Swindon and Second City Customs from Birmingham had made the effort. Now, I know there are sadly, even in this country, certain builders who won't attend a show unless they've been paid to do so, but it would be good to see a few more UK entries in the future. They would be made very welcome, while the venue is only a five hour drive from Calais. Probably longer without sat nav.

While there may have been a paucity of UK bikes, it seemed that most of Europe had fielded entries. As well as the home country, there were builders from Switzerland, Austria, France, Poland, Italy and Holland. Two of the Dutch bikes were very familiar to me. René van Tuil arrived with his 'steam' driven, er, contraption of which you can see more on page 26, and we kept ourselves thoroughly

entertained by sitting a short distance from the bike and then remotely operating the whistle when people leant over the bike. The other machine belongs to 100% Biker freelancer, Floris Velthuis, and was built by Dutch motorcycle maestro and all-round nice bloke, Arno Overweel, and you'll be seeing a full feature on that bike here very soon.

However, Winston Yeh had probably travelled the furthest to the show, flying all the way from Taiwan to show his latest design, the Graphite Speedster. I left Winston earnestly performing regular demonstrations of the trick bits of his motorcycle because, let's face it, given the choice of examining fancy bits of engineering or firing up a steam whistle and scaring the lederhosen off someone, you'd go for the whistle, wouldn't you? Yes. Yes, you would...

The show opened to the public at midday on Friday and this was probably the best (ie, quietest) day to see the show, especially as it was open until 8pm, but it was still almost impossible to see everything in a single day. The show was spread over three large halls, each one of which you could have spent the best part of a day perusing. Then the fine young people of





## ONE OF THE DRAWS OF CUSTOMBIKE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE LIVE BUILD-OFF COMPETITION AND THIS YEAR WAS NO EXCEPTION

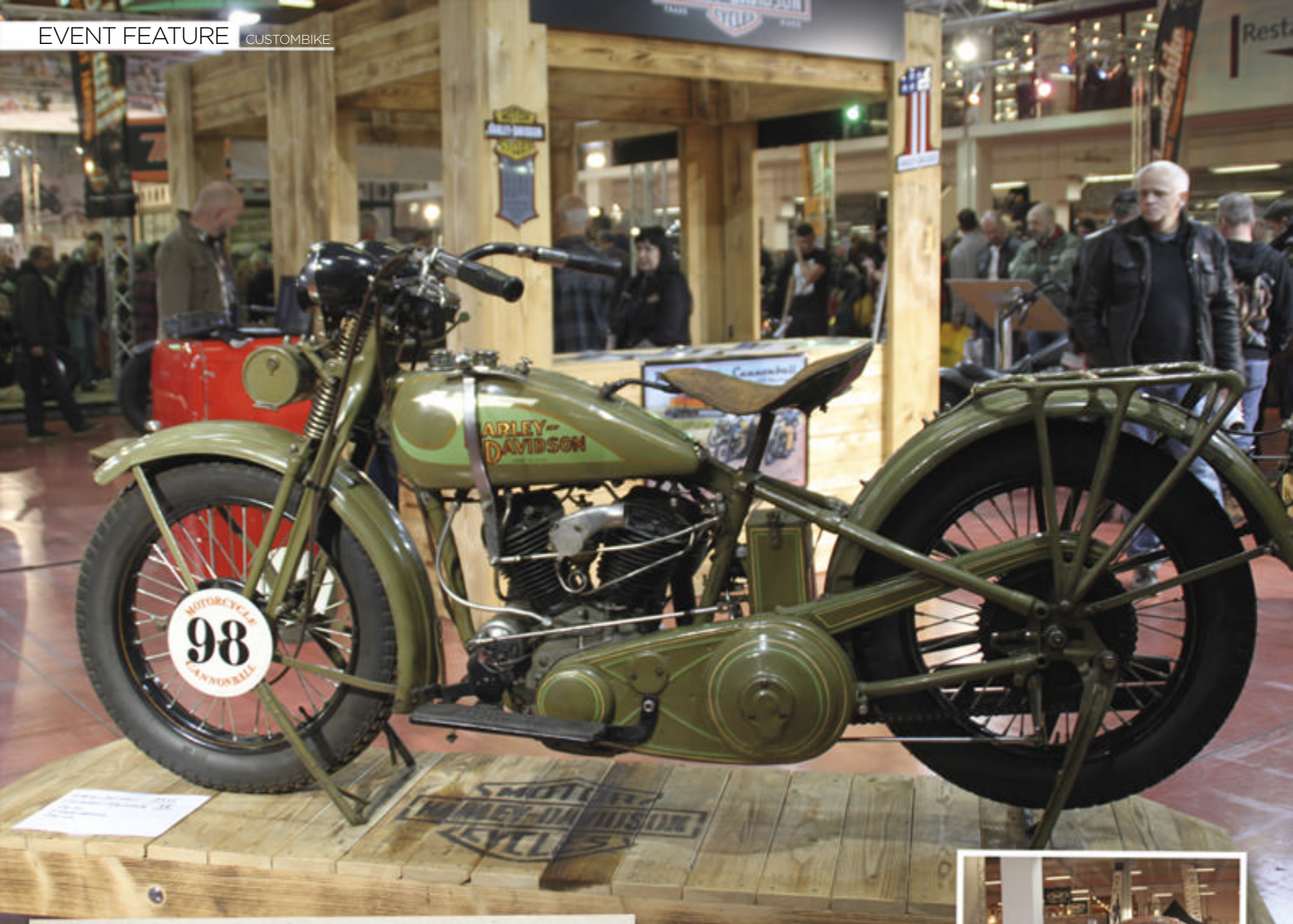
Motorcycle Storehouse swept me off to dinner with Cory and Zach Ness, so thank you to them for a good meal and the chance to gratuitously name drop!

Having been away from this show for a while, I noticed how trends have changed. Five years ago, it was still very much the province of high-necked, fat rear-ended chops, a style which was then already on the decline in the United Kingdom. This time, there was the expected showing of skinny-barred, peanut-tanked, ducktail-fendered Sportsters, but also a resurgence in 1960s and '70s-influenced chops. Some were more successful than others, and there was a bit too much metal flake and tan upholstery for a sane person. The trend for stripping stuff off an unexciting bike and then charging the earth for it was as prevalent here as elsewhere, if the Yamaha SR400 with cut down seat rails and a price tag of £5500 was anything by which to judge.

One of the draws of Custombike has always been the live build-off competition and this year was no exception. Although two teams put together a custom bike over the course of the show, it isn't, of course, completely from scratch (don't believe everything

you see on television) and each team would have been 'preparing' their build over the previous months. This year, for the first time, neither of the teams were to be from Germany. On one side of the stage would be Sergio Bayarri and his Sbay Motor Company team from Spain; on the other, representing the USA, Bill Dodge of Bling Cycles. However, just ten days before the show opened, the Bling Cycles team had to pull out when its bike parts got tied up in customs in Orlando. Apparently, it was American





## I WANDERED OFF FOR A FIRST LOOK AT HARLEY'S STREET 750 AND WAS SURPRISED AT HOW LITTLE I LIKED IT

red tape at its finest; there was no 'dangerous goods declaration' for the petrol and oil tanks, and, because they were one-off handmade parts and thus had no manufacturer specifications, US Customs and Border Protection had impounded them.

So, with little more than a week's notice, Toxic Bikes from the north German coast stepped up to the plate and took on the task of building a bike in a genuinely short time span, no small feat when up against the likes of Sbay. Arno Kruth's team kept things simple ('simple' being a relative term) with an old school chopper with skinny bars, peanut tank and ducktail mudguard. There was a merciful lack of metal flake, with a paint job inspired by the Baltic Sea. The Sbay team, however, ran out of time with their futuristic V-twin build, which would have assured Toxic the victory even if the public vote hadn't been overwhelmingly on the side of the German company anyway.

As well as the Build Off to catch people's eye, there was, I understand, exotic dancing shows during the weekend which I managed to miss entirely. This wasn't out of any prudery, but simply because I didn't investigate the third hall where it was held until Sunday when it was time for the prizegiving. While waiting, I idly watched the athletic pole dancer's act on the Harley-Davidson stand; actually,



it was more amusing to watch the crowd who ranged from blokes with their families pretending not to look, to a late middle-aged man in slacks and an anorak who stationed himself in front of the stage and filmed the whole performance. I wandered off for a first look at Harley's Street 750 and was surprised at how little I liked it. The lines don't flow, the finish is unimpressive and it looks like it was put together out of stuff the MoCo had left over.

The prizegiving being in German, I didn't understand much of it, although it was good to see Herr van Tuil win 'Craziest Bike' (it couldn't be anything else), while Winston took away Best of Show and was even seen to smile briefly, although it might have been wind from the currywurst.

At the end of three days, I still hadn't seen everything in the show (I found drift trikes just before the show closed, to much delighted squeaking). It might be in a foreign country, it might be in the dead of winter, but Custombike is worth serious consideration for your calendar. I can sell you a sat nav... ☒



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# BORN TO RACE

**There are few things as exhilarating as drag racing. Ever since the advent of the internal combustion engine, men (and women) have lined up against each other on straight pieces of road with the sole intention of beating their opponent**

 WORDS: BLUE PHOTOS: MATT WOODS

**W**ithout resorting to Google, when do you think the first sprint meeting took place? Astoundingly, it was well over a century ago. In June 1899, some enterprising souls arranged a race meeting on a public road near Colchester in Essex. Of course it wasn't legal, even back then, and soon other venues were used. Long driveways, seaside promenades – anything that was basically straight and reasonably flat. When Brighton Council surfaced Madeira Drive with a new invention called Tarmac, motorists and motorcyclists were delighted and, in 1905, the first Brighton Motor Week took place. Alas, the local residents weren't quite so thrilled, especially when the bill for resurfacing the road after the meeting was £4,000. Racing – or at least legal racing

– didn't return to Brighton's seafront until after the Great War.

Sprints were regularly held at seaside resorts for the first half of the 20th century but it was, perhaps a little surprisingly, the Second World War which proved to be a boon for drag racing. While many RAF bases were already in existence, when American servicemen arrived in the United Kingdom in 1942, there was a huge boom in the construction of new airfields – some 70 in East Anglia alone and others in Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire – and airfields meant long straight runways and wide open spaces.

When the war ended, many of these airfields were no longer needed and fell into disuse, or, at least, unused with the exception of locals who often first learned to drive and then to race on the crumbling concrete. As the

**IT WAS, PERHAPS A LITTLE SURPRISINGLY, THE SECOND WORLD WAR WHICH PROVED TO BE A BOON FOR DRAG RACING**







sport of drag racing developed, illegal street racing was no longer viable, and people realised those swathes of old air bases could have a new lease of life. Small wonder then that all of the UK's primary drag strips – Santa Pod, Shakespeare County Raceway, Elvington, North Weald, East Kirkby, Crail and York – were originally airfields. Because of noise concerns, Health & Safety issues and the price of land, we're unlikely to ever see a new major drag strip built in this country, which is why it's vital we support those we already have to ensure their future.

And if you take yourself to a drag meeting, you get to see awesome motorcycles like Chris 'Hem' Emmens' Triumph. Hem has been racing on the quarter mile for a number of years, at first with the 'Hembug' VW which became a regular sight at many



meetings. Unlike many people, Hem (a man who admits that he will probably be 18 forever in his head) then moved from racing on four wheels to on two. Like any motorsport, drag racing can rip holes in your pockets and your bank balance. To someone outside the sport, this can seem beyond comprehension – to devote so much money and time in return for a few seconds of adrenalin frenzy. Or having to pick up the pieces of a blown engine and start all over again. But then drag





racing really does fulfil the brief of the old cliché, 'if I had to explain, you wouldn't understand'.

Hem is the epitome of the heart and soul of grassroots racing, building a race bike in a small garage while living on a bus, or, I believe, a boat now (don't worry, it is a proper boat and not just a bus which has met with an unfortunate and watery accident). This is his second Triumph drag bike and it began with a 1960s-style frame that he happened upon at an autojumble. Hem says it's very similar to an Alf Hagon frame; Alf, of course, was 11-times British Grasstrack Champion, as well as the first Englishman to record over 200mph on a motorcycle (on his nitrous Hagon-JAP twin at – yes – an airfield in Suffolk in 1968) and now known the

world over for Hagon shock absorbers and wheels. As Alf started building frames in the late 1950s in his Mum's garden shed, it might well be the real thing, but who knows? Hem's previous drag bike was even more of an enigma with its early years and provenance a complete mystery.

The gentleman selling the frame had previously fitted it with a supercharged Triumph 500cc engine and used it for sprinting. The chassis was all that Hem wanted and he took it away to spend the next year or so building the bike you see pictured here. The engine was bought from

another old sprinter who'd had it sitting underneath his bench for some ten years. Hem says; "It was built by Lees Racings, a very well-known Triumph engine builder which specialised in competition strength crankcases. It was originally built for a speed record run but, in the end, the engine was never actually used.

"Once I'd bought it, I stripped the motor down, took it completely to bits and had a look at all the components inside. It's got John Lees' racing crankcases and one-off barrels, as well as a Lees'

**DRAG RACING REALLY DOES FULFIL THE BRIEF OF THE OLD CLICHÉ, 'IF I HAD TO EXPLAIN, YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND'**







## HEM IS THE EPITOME OF THE HEART AND SOUL OF GRASSROOTS RACING, BUILDING A RACE BIKE IN A SMALL GARAGE WHILE LIVING ON A BUS

one-off Triumph T140 cylinder head with a lot of port work. It also has a Nourish Engineering T140 crankshaft and cams and Carrillo rods. It runs a Bewley 2-speed gearbox and a Bewley clutch, while the ignition system is a K2F magneto."

At the rear is an 18-inch Avon slick tyre on an alloy flanged rim, while the front end is from a Triumph Tiger Cub. At the moment, Hem is feeding the engine on petrol through the Amal 930 carburettors – "just to get it running nice," he says, "But, in the future, it will have a Shorrock supercharger

and running on nitro."

So far, Hem and his band of willing and pressganged pit crew have seen the bike run 105mph, but, due to the ignition system not being able to keep up, that wasn't at full power, so they're confident that the Triumph has much more to offer. Hem is aiming at 11-second quarters this year, while he also wants to see how it will fare on the sand at the Pendine Speed Week in North Wales in May. As Hem says, 'peace to all' – but that won't stop him wanting to thrash the hell out of anyone lining up beside his little Triumph! ☒



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WORDS &amp; PHOTOS: STU GARLAND

# A CELEBRATION OF BIKES AND BIKERS

## GRAND PAVILION, MATLOCK BATH, DERBYSHIRE

'A Celebration of Bikes and Bikers' was how this particular weekend at Matlock Bath, Derbyshire, had been publicised in advance. In the event, nobody could argue otherwise, as it certainly lived up to that description



**T**he 'Bikes and Bikers' concept is the brainchild of one Steve Hackett, proprietor of Hackshack Custom Cycles and a well-known face within the UK bike scene. For the Matlock Bath bash, Steve joined forces with speedway's Sam Ermolenko, a past world champion no less, with the pair being ably assisted in the venture by a hard-working team of volunteers.

The choice of Matlock Bath as a venue was a no-brainer for Steve, given that it's long been a magnet for all kinds of riders who regularly converge here in considerable numbers throughout the year. Nestling in the crook of a winding gorge, the place is like an inland seaside resort that's been trapped in time. Think Isle of Man—it may have seen better days, but it's still great fun to visit, as countless two-wheeled visitors will tell you. As such, Matlock Bath has always had something of a head start when it comes to anything bike-oriented.

The focus of the Bikes and Bikers event was the Grand Pavilion (though a more accurate description might be simply 'Pavilion'...), outside of which proceedings were dominated by the huge yellow Pirelli truck, with its even bigger awning.

Under this cover was a selection of current world champion speedway bikes, as well as the single most monstrous trike I think I've ever seen. Powered by a massive Jaguar XJS V12 engine, it was ridden there by owner and builder, Lloyd, who concedes that it truly is one beast of a machine.

A couple of TT-winning Manx Nortons were on display, complete with their trophies, while the ceremonial firing up of Mike Hailwood's 4-cylinder Honda racer stopped things in their tracks. Well, it stopped me, anyway; I've never heard an inline-4 engine sounding remotely like that... 'awesome' is the only word for it.

Down in the Pavilion gardens, there were the custom and classic bikes, two displays which merged together quite satisfyingly as the weekend progressed. Amongst others, the effervescent and ever-entertaining Malcolm Green had brought along his superb Virago trike and Sam Barks flew the 'fighter flag with her pink camo GSX-R, while Steve Peters' single-sided Norton masterpiece probably took the honours for being the overall star of the show.

A large part of the classic presence was down





## THE CEREMONIAL FIRING UP OF MIKE HAILWOOD'S 4-CYLINDER HONDA RACER STOPPED THINGS IN THEIR TRACKS. WELL, IT STOPPED ME, ANYWAY...

to one particular guy showing no fewer than six bikes, in the shape of three Triumphs, two Nortons and a Honda 400-4. He had another half-dozen at home, too, claiming his collection to be a much better investment than any savings plan available. The older contingent was also graced by the presence of an Ariel Square-4, a James Captain and an Ariel Leader belonging to the President of the VOC.

Then there was one man's collection – a Rocket 3-engined Hurricane; a Rob North replica racer (sourced personally for the owner many years ago by no less a Triumph luminary than Percy Tait); what I originally thought was a bog stock T160V and a spectacularly wonderful hand-built V6 Trident – yes, I did say V6 – featuring two banks of one-off machined triple barrels and heads mounted to specially cast and engineered crankcases. The T160V that I'd walked past several times turned out to be the Quadrant (or Quadrant), a one-off 4-cylinder Triumph R&D prototype built in 1973 by Doug Hele who later joined Norman Hyde when Meriden went down, and where he actually built an 850cc half-race Trident engine for me, though I ended up having to fix a surprising number of faults myself...

Elsewhere, the atmosphere was nicely laid back. The locals were most welcoming (though I have to say that the enforcement by traffic wardens of the 'no return within 1 hour' parking rule for bikes was completely unnecessary), and there was constant entertainment to be had just watching the eclectic mix of machines and riders coming and going. The sports/touring bike majority was interspersed with a number of very tidy custom bikes and trikes, and one or two really interesting classics and veterans. At one point, a clutch of Yam FSIE riders arrived – not quite en masse, but at least together – and several different groups of scooter boys turned up over the weekend. Everybody mixed, too; the sense of bonhomie here was epitomised for me by the sight of two enthusiastic lads in their late teens being invited by the owners to sit on a very nicely-restored Vincent Rapide and an equally tidy BSA A10. Well done, those guys.

This was the organisers' first shot at the Bikes and Bikers weekend and, while they'll admit there were several things they'd have done differently, overall, the event wasn't at all bad. I enjoyed myself enormously, anyway, and I'll be looking forward to joining in the fun again later this year. ☘



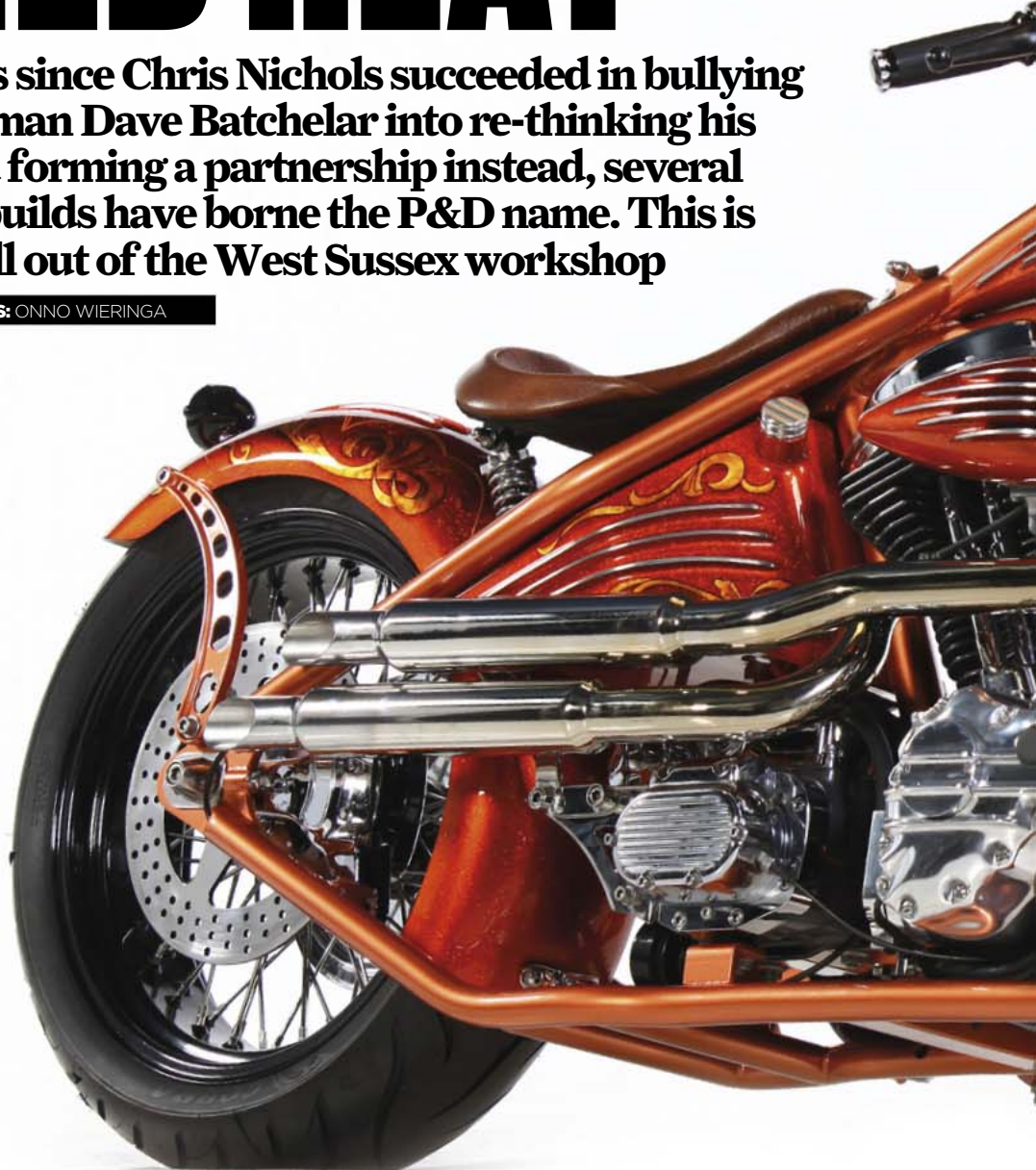
# PANNED HEAT

**In the couple of years since Chris Nichols succeeded in bullying P&D Customs main man Dave Batchelar into re-thinking his retirement plans and forming a partnership instead, several most accomplished builds have borne the P&D name. This is the most recent to roll out of the West Sussex workshop**

**WORDS:** STU GARLAND **PHOTOS:** ONNO WIERINGA

**D**ubbed 'Panned Heat', the bike's starting point was a rigid chassis which had originally been built to form the basis of a customer's Dyna Glide-based project, but that had then found its way back into Dave's hands. In the spring of 2014, after knocking around a number of ideas for a new build, the pair decided to start work on the unemployed frame, setting their sights on an autumn deadline to allow them to enter the finished bike in November's BigTwin show in Rosmalen, Holland.

With a big Ultima V-twin lump and 6-speed gearbox earmarked for Panned Heat, Dave's first job was to lop a few surplus inches out of the frame, a job that's certainly a great deal more involved than I've just made it sound. In order to inject an element of quirkiness, he then removed the single tubular front downtube entirely and replaced it with a specially-fabricated curved I-section member featuring a series of elongated holes, a theme which would be complemented by a similar



**THERE'S A SPOT OF VERY NEAT ENGRAVING WORK ON VIEW IN THE SHAPE OF THE P&D CUSTOMS LOGO ON THE BRAKE AND CLUTCH HANDLEBAR RESERVOIR CAPS**

approach to the rear mudguard struts and number plate mount.

I described the Ultima power plant as 'big', but that's somewhat of an understatement. Simply for the hell of it, Chris and Dave settled on a 127 cubic-inch behemoth that they'll admit was hardly the most practical option. But, after all, why not? Feeding

the fuel/air mixture into the engine's cavernous cylinders would clearly require a man-sized carburettor, hence the choice of a Mikuni HSR45. Handling the rather less demanding task of expelling the spent gases is a one-off exhaust system – a beautiful piece of work that illustrates perfectly why Dave's







fabricating talents have, for so long, remained much sought after by British bike builders. The high level, staggered format, with each pipe seamlessly incorporating a silencer was, he says, inspired by photos of pre-war Indians. There is, though, a bit of a fly in the ointment; apparently, the stainless pipes have a penchant for bluing up rather quickly when the engine starts running, and it's been, on occasion, a

pain in the arse having to take the pipes off in order to restore their appearance on the buffing wheel prior to, say, a photo shoot or custom show appearance.

Hooking up the engine and gearbox is a cleverly designed primary case assembly procured from French firm EMD (Esteves Motorcycle Design). It combines the demands of a contemporary V-twin engine/transmission set-up with the retro feel of





diamond tin primary cases as fitted to Harley Big Twins (most notably JD/U models and Knuckleheads) from the first half of the 20th century. These old-timers' primaries were originally made from thin pressed steel, but the EMD offering is sturdily engineered and of all-aluminium construction. And it's oil tight, too...

One of Panned Heat's most prominent features is, as you'll no doubt already have spotted, the 'ribs-and-grilles' theme running through its construction. For a start, there are the elaborately fabricated handlebars comprising four layers of laser-cut stainless profiles meticulously welded together by Dave to produce a unique new take on motorcycle steering mechanisms. Just ahead of those bars, and sitting atop the DNA springer forks (complete with one-off reinforcing struts welded to the rear legs), is a powdercoated

6-inch Bates headlight boasting a one-off grille machined in-house at the P&D workshop.

Lower down and slightly further back, the underslung petrol tank is another Batchelar one-off, which had returned with the aforementioned frame from the aborted project. Dave carefully created a set of contoured stainless steel ribs, three of which were then welded to each side of the tank, while the hand-made oil tank (that doubles as a battery/electrics box) and the seriously truncated rear mudguard received similar treatment. The multiple-rib motif also extends to the air filter cover, though Dave decided that it would only really look right with five ribs rather than three.

When it came to covering up all the bare metal displayed in the project's dry build, there was never any question about using anyone else but Dave's long-time friend and regular business contact, the redoubtable Keith

**THE HIGH LEVEL, STAGGERED EXHAUST SYSTEM, EACH PIPE SEAMLESSLY INCORPORATING A SILENCER WAS INSPIRED BY PHOTOS OF PRE-WAR INDIANS**







## SIMPLY FOR THE HELL OF IT, CHRIS AND DAVE SETTLED ON A 127 CUBIC-INCH BEHEMOTH THAT THEY'LL ADMIT WAS HARDLY THE MOST PRACTICAL OPTION...

Baker at Classic Cycle Works. Not only could Keith be relied upon totally to produce a top quality paint job, as he's done numerous times in the past for customers of P&D, but his spray shop is only two doors away. Keith duly laid on layers of Tangerine Candy over a prismatic metal flake base, onto which he then applied some flawless shaded gold leafing emphasised by perfect complementary pinstriping. While he was at it, Keith also took care of painting Panned Heat's frame and forks using one of several different shades of copper-finish lacquer he'd had languishing unused on a shelf for donkeys' years, before Dave chose one of them, that is.

On the subject of the bike's finish, the guys would also like to thank Johnny Marshall for painting the engine while they were away on holiday in the States, and give an honorary

mention to Andy at A&JM Polishing in Hove for the – yes – polishing. Lastly, although easily overlooked, there's also a spot of very neat engraving work on view in the shape of the P&D Customs logo on the brake and clutch handlebar reservoir caps. It was carried out by none other than the legendary Don Blocksidge, and while graphic design is a long way from Don's usual fare, he nevertheless produced the quality professional job you'd expect of such a highly-skilled artisan.

Oh yes, the Big Twin show last year – how did things turn out for Panned Heat? Well, Chris and Dave were delighted to return home with the award for Runner-Up Best in Show tucked under one or other of their arms. You can be assured that they haven't been resting on their laurels, either, so we'll look forward to more mighty fine custom bikes from P&D before too long. ☒

## SPECIFICATION SHEET

### Engine:

127 cubic-inch Ultima V-twin, Xzotic Cycle 'Panhead' rocker and timing covers, Mikuni HSR45 carburettor, one-off ribbed air filter cover by Dave at P&D Customs, one-off high level 2-into-2 exhaust system in stainless, Zodiac coil, Motogadget keyless ignition system, 6-speed Ultima gearbox, hydraulic clutch conversion, retro EMD 'diamond tin' primary case assembly.

### Frame:

Single downtube rigid designed for Harley-Davidson Dyna Glide fitment.

### Front end:

23" wheel rim and spokes by the Devon Rim Company, 130/60 x 23" Avon AV71 Cobra tyre, one-off tapered stainless axle nut/spacers, single 4-pot DNA brake caliper, Zodiac disc, Goodridge 'Sniper' brake line, stock length DNA springer forks with one-off rear bracing struts by P&D, powdercoated stainless one-off handlebar assembly by P&D, Zodiac throttle and controls, 6" Bates headlight with one-off grille by P&D.

### Rear end:

18" wheel rim and spokes by the Devon Rim Company, 180/55 x 23" Avon AV72 Cobra tyre, one-off tapered stainless axle nut/spacers, replica Softail brake caliper, Goodridge 'Sniper' brake line, Zodiac disc and drive pulley, one-off sidemount number plate holder, Crime Scene Choppers taillight.

### Miscellaneous:

One-off underslung petrol tank by P&D, Crime Scene Choppers filler cap, one-off leather-covered sprung solo seat, dual mountain bike shocks, one-off oil tank/battery box and underseat cover by P&D, 'lots of clever little bits' by Neil Gander at Tamsin Engineering, one-off head steady in stainless bar, black anodised Custom Chrome forward controls, one-off stainless 'winklepicker' sidestand by P&D.

### Paint and finish:

Tangerine Candy over prismatic 'flake', gold leafing/pinstriping and frame/forks copper finish by Keith Baker at Classic Cycle Works, Slinfold. Engine paint by Johnny Marshall. Polishing by Andy at A&JM Polishing, Hove. Reservoir cap engraving by Don Blocksidge.









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## PANNED HEAT

P&D Customs' Ultima V-twin





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WORDS &amp; PHOTOS: ODGIE

# NEW YEAR RUN

## WORDEN PARK, LEYLAND, LANCASHIRE

The New Year Run to Worden Park might be a damn cold ride, but it's always a damn interesting one



**Main image:**  
I hadn't ridden my Trusty Triumph for quite a few months, so I was quite gratified when I dragged it out the shed and it fired up straight away. That's just one of the reasons I've kept this bike for 35 years now.

**O**rganised (loosely) by the local VMCC, the format stays pretty much the same every year. There's no particular route, no classes or awards, you just get out your old bike, arrange to meet a few mates, ride in when you feel like it, chat to whoever you like, and ride out when it suits you. It works well, there are plenty of people I only see there once a year, a chance to catch up on the last twelve months of tales and tribulations, of builds and bother, of fun and frolics. It's also a very good chance to catch some interesting and unusual motorcycles. I'm always quite amazed at how there's always so many new and different bikes to check out each year – regular attendees work their way slowly through their collections, serial builders bring out yet another recent restoration – and the event tends to throw up lots of oddballs along the way. So, feast your eyes on this little lot, fellow petrolheads... ☒







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**1:** Smaller brother to the all-conquering Dominator, the Norton Navigator came out in the early Sixties, powered by a 350cc twin and with enclosing bodywork, but they were never a sought-after model, a situation which still exists to this day. This lovely oily-rag example was complete and original, started first kick and ran sweetly, and yet was on offer for still only £1200.

**2:** Coventry Eagle. Pure vintage sex. Nuff said.

**3:** Old scooters have a charm all their own. Zundapp made the Bella from 1953 to 1964, a very successful model. The BSA Sunbeam

is a rebadged version of the Triumph Tigress, a 250cc four-stroke twin which would do 70mph and around 120mpg, but never achieved real success as the build quality was pretty appalling. Contemporary conclusions were 'it was a joy to own, as long as someone else was paying the repair bills...'

**4:** Although it's fair to say Triumph set the standard for rorty parallel twins in post-war years, it was building neat single cylinder bikes right from the very early days, as this nicely restored pre-war example shows.

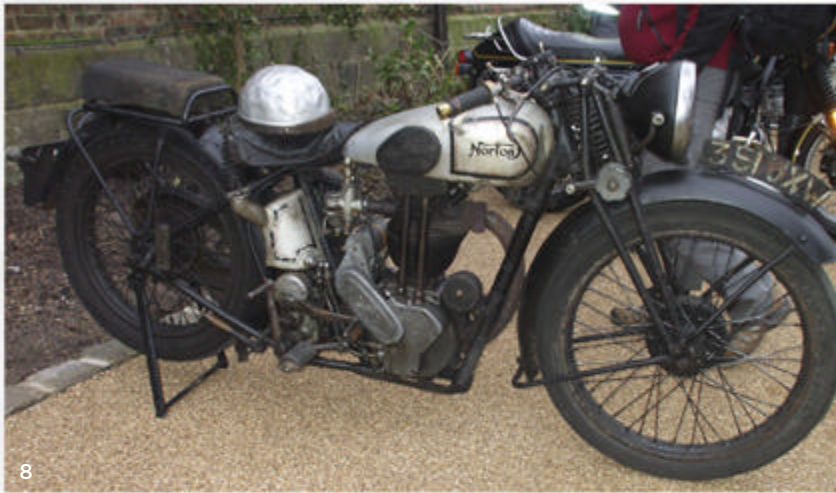
**5:** As the price of genuine old Brits continues

to be beyond most people's reach, Royal Enfields are still coming into their own. Alloy guards, high-level pipe, single seat and chrome tank are all that's needed to turn out a very respectable looking West Coast styled motorcycle.

**6:** Laverda RGS1000 Triple. Pure classic sex. Nuff said.

**7:** 'Fore & Aft' Raleigh dates back to the early 1920s, and features one of the very earliest forms of swing-arm rear suspension, with a pair of leaf springs sticking out behind the seat.





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**8:** 1936 Norton looks superbly patinated, untouched and original. Yet only a couple of weeks before it was bought as a non-runner painted all over in old blue Dulux. That's what I call a proper restoration.

**9:** A Honda Spacy! A Honda Spacy! Ain't seen one of them for a zillion years. Pale metallic brown, with two-tone brown seat, gold trim, and horrid angles everywhere, it epitomises the god-awful early '80s in every respect. Ugly as sin at the time, but now with a quaint retro charm some 30 years on.

**10:** Homemade seat, proper squeezy horn, insouciantly lounging against a wall. Grand.

**11:** A65 Firebird Street Scrambler – a much under-rated bike, overshadowed by the ubiquitous Triumphs, but a nicely styled and rapid motorcycle nonetheless.

**12:** Hands up all those who said 'Ariel Leader' when they saw this photo? Right, go to the back of the class then... It's an easy mistake to make, but this is the much rarer Velocette Valiant in fully-enclosed variant. Developed from the water-cooled 200cc flat twin LE, or 'Noddy Bike' as they were known, used by

police forces throughout Britain, their near silent operation meant the local bobby could sneak up and catch the bad guys before they knew he was coming.

**13:** BSA Pre-Unit twins aren't a popular choice for classic sidecar racing (although the later Unit A65s had some success). But check out those big Amal TT carbs and the oil-pump conversion in the timing cover, and you know this one means business.

**14:** Jaeson Caunce's Triumph Daytona 500, regularly thrashed in classic racing.



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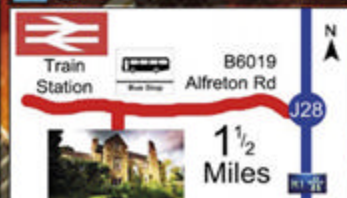
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# Denver's Choppers

Long ago, way, way back in the mists of time, before aftermarket parts catalogues, before 'Easy Rider', before you could buy a readymade chopper, even before what came to be known as 'Swedish style', there was Denver Mullins

WORDS & PICS: BLUE

**I**n 1967 Denver Mullins was a 23-year-old paint sprayer running a body shop in southern California that he'd opened three years previously with a \$300 loan. But he'd begun modifying bicycles in his early teens and that naturally led onto motorcycles. So, with his friend Butch Araiza, he opened Denver's Choppers on Baseline Road in San Bernadino, California. Butch says; "The idea was to be able to buy parts for our own bikes and start building bikes to sell. I don't think either of us thought it would take off the way it did."

Within just a couple of years, Denver's Choppers had developed a particular style which still makes it instantly recognisable today. It was a style epitomised by long, low frames, even longer forks and prismatic and diamond-shaped fuel tanks. Every bracket and mount was moulded into the frame to ensure that the lines flowed perfectly. An 11-foot long bike with 25-inch over stock springers looked elegant. Yet it was a look that was developed by Denver Mullins out of necessity as well as aesthetics, as his daughter, Lisa, explains: "My dad started modifying motorcycles in the late '60s because he was a big man – 6'3" and big built with it – and he wanted to ride comfortably. That's when the low profile frames were designed and produced, and to make the low profile frame look cool, he decided that the front end need to be longer. The laidback appearance of his choppers was so that he could



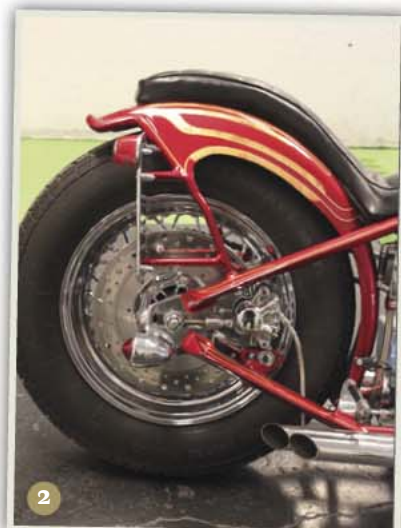
ride long and easy without his size getting in the way. And, because regular gas tanks were too bulky, he created the diamond tank!"

Soon, Denver's Choppers had moved to a bigger shop and its bikes were starting to feature in national magazines. Denver assembled a crew of craftsmen to do virtually every part of a build in house, a cast of players which would eventually include brothers Li'l Freddie and

**1:** Exorcist's Delight Sportster from 1973.

**2:** Beautifully executed rear mudguard and number plate bracket.

**3:** Kayelynn Johnson and some of his Denver's collection.



**A 1970s Denver's advert offers frames for not only Harleys, but Hondas, Triumphs, Nortons, BSAs, Kawasakis and Yamahas**





JR Hernandez who built frames and front ends (Freddie Hernandez is still very much in business as Fred's Frames in Rialto, California, his springer and rigid forks used by the likes of Chica and Billy Lane among countless others), Mondo Porras on moulding and painters Mike 'Mafufa' Craig and Donny Walker, although both Denver and Fred also painted bikes themselves.

While the release of 'Easy Rider' in 1969 would ignite the chopper boom, Denver was already ahead of the game and of those who would set up in business in the wake of that movie. He'd found that people were clamouring not just for his bikes, but for the parts that Denver's Choppers were designing and fabricating. Now, when any custom part imaginable

## Several motorcycles which were famous show and feature bikes of the 1970s have reappeared

**4:** A moulded Denver's frame being restored.

**5:** Denver Mullins in 1970.

**6:** The very first Denver's Choppers shop in San Bernadino.

**7:** Long, low with diamond tanks - this was Denver's Choppers' style.

is available at the click of a button or at the end of the phone, it should be remembered that, back when Denver's Choppers was building its reputation, very few custom parts were available. In 1970, Custom Chrome was starting out as Coast Cycles in a tiny rundown shop in San Jose, Paughco was still a tool and die company producing components for the aerospace industry and the mass availability of the off-the-shelf parts was years in the future.

Denver's Choppers became the first company to manufacture long downtube stretched frames - what is loosely termed 'Swedish style'

could (and perhaps should) have justifiably been called 'Denver's style'. It was something of a revelation for people to simply be able to buy a handmade custom frame but here Denver also had an ace up his sleeve. While other fledgling accessory companies would concentrate on producing components to fit Harley engines, Denver's Choppers built both rigid and swinging arm frames for just about any contemporary bike. A Denver's advert from the 1970s offers frames for not only Harleys, but Hondas, Triumphs, Nortons, BSAs, Kawasakis and Yamahas. Denver's Choppers even built





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custom frames for Honda CB350s.

This was not because Denver Mullins identified a gap in the market (although this may have been part of his thinking), but because he genuinely preferred Japanese engines over home grown American products. People who knew him at the time say that he loved Hondas over Harleys because of the performance, quietness and reliability of the former.

Denver had well-defined ideas on the bikes that bore his name and woe betide anyone who contradicted or ignored those ideas. In 1973, Fred Hernandez moved from painting to building and welding and Mike Craig was hired as Denver's painter. Denver made it clear from the start that Mike would paint every bike to his instructions or he wouldn't

**8:** Denver's bikes are for riding. Here Kayelynn's son prepares to race a Kwak-engined chopper at the Kingman Street Drags in 2011.

**9:** Denver's choppers on display at Born Free in 2012.

**10:** When Kayelynn needed the tank of 'My Dream' pinstriped, Lil' Louie in California was recommended. Unknown to Kayelynn, Louie had originally painted the bike in 1978.

**11:** Gone but not forgotten: Denver Mullins.



10



11



9



12

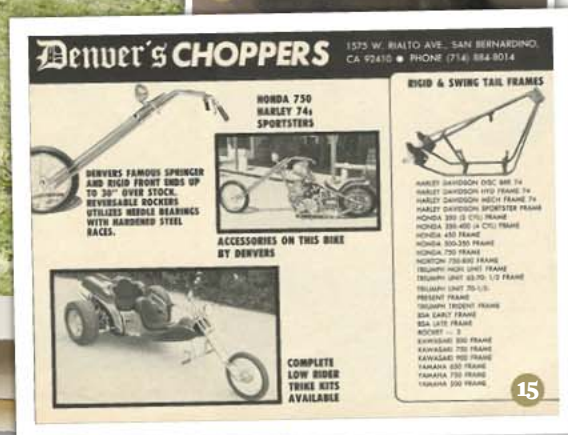
have a job. A few months later, as Denver was due to go away for the weekend, Mike decided to paint a Sportster with flames. He argued that they could bring flames back into vogue, but Denver refused point black. Of course, while Denver was away, Mike executed a black paint job – with yellow and orange flames. As soon as Denver got back, he fired Mike. However, when the Sportster's owner turned up, he liked the paint so much that Denver backed down and gave Mike his job back. The Sporty was called 'Exorcist's Delight', and more of that bike later.

Although magazine features had helped advertise his company, Denver also wasn't afraid to upset the press. Easyriders – a title which had given Denver's Choppers its first cover – turned up in San Bernadino to photograph a Denver's bike. According to his daughter, all was going well until the photographer turned up with a naked model and asked her to sit on the bike.

Denver Mullins didn't appreciate this artistic touch. He stormed in, saying; "The day I need something on my bike to get readers to look at it is the day I quit building bikes! My bikes are beautiful enough that people look at them themselves. And get that girl off my seat before she ruins it!" Easyriders didn't feature a Mullins bike for years.

By the mid-1980s, Denver had begun to pursue other interests. Although the shop continued, along with a thriving mail order business, he began not only racing boats, but designing safety capsules for boats similar to those used in jet fighters. These capsules have been credited with saving many lives in a highly dangerous sport, but they couldn't save the man who designed them. In October 1992, while attempting to earn his Top Fuel licence at Puddingstone Lake in San Dimas, Denver's drag boat became airborne and then plunged beneath the water. He drowned, something of which he had had lifelong fear. Denver





**Denver's Choppers' style was epitomised by long, low frames, even longer forks and prismic and diamond-shaped fuel tanks**

Mullins was just 48 years old.

Although Mondo Porras took over the name and continues to operate as Denver's Choppers in Reno, Nevada, there the story of these trailblazing choppers might have ended. But, in the same year as Denver died, Kayelynn Johnson, a young car painter from Kingman, Arizona, spotted a CB750 chopper in a customer's garage. All he knew about the bike was that he wanted it, and a deal was done whereby he painted the owner's car in exchange for the bike, something of which Denver Mullins would probably have approved – he once built a chopper for a dentist in exchange for his daughter's orthodontic work. Kayelynn didn't, at that point, even know he had a Denver's bike. It was another customer who thought that it looked a bit like the choppers that were featured in 1970s magazines, so he came

back with a box full of old Street Choppers. In just those couple of dozen mags, there were no less than six Denver's choppers and that started what has become something of an obsession for Kavelynn.

He discovered that his own Honda had belonged to Butch Araiza and he started putting together the story of Denver's Choppers. He was soon joined in this quest by Jim Stephen who bought himself a Denver's bike, despite having never owned a motorcycle before. Since then, Kayelynn has made it his mission to collect together as many Denver's choppers as possible (it's estimated that the San Bernadino shop was responsible for as many as 2000 builds or part builds during Denver's lifetime), persuading friends to hunt down and buy bikes too! More people have got involved over the years, and

**12:** 'Typical Lowlife' was Fred Hernandez's own bike until 2005. The 1983 Kawasaki KZ1000 is an unrestored survivor bike.

**13:** The correct collective noun for a group of Denver's choppers is a stretch. True.

**14:** When this 1976 Honda CB750 came to Kayelynn's workshop, he found the original blue candy paint and pinstriping by Li'l Louie—underneath a coat of black paint.

**15:** An early advert by the company.

several motorcycles which were famous show and feature bikes of the 1970s have reappeared, some still in surprisingly good condition and others lovingly restored by Kayelynn and Jim. They even own 'Exorcist's Delight', the bike over which Mike Craig was sacked (it was brown when they found it, but Kayelynn has restored the flames). When I first met Kayelynn eight years ago, it was the only Harley that the friends owned, but it's particularly precious because it's the earliest bike in the collection. With a 20-inch over front end, it wouldn't look out of place in any modern custom show, yet it was finished in 1973.

In the last couple of years, Kayelynn and Jim have put on displays of Denver's Choppers builds at the Grand National Roadster Show and Born Free, and, along the way, they've met people who were an integral part of the story. But, more importantly, they're showing Denver Mullins's amazing bikes to a new generation, and I think Denver would have liked that very much. ☒





WORDS: JOSH TREE PHOTOS: YODA

# 5TH NCC NOTTS CUSTOM SHOW

## NEWARK RUFC, NEWARK-ON-TRENT, NOTTS

Ah, Nottinghamshire – birthplace and home of the chopper. San Francisco and Southern California and Sweden may try and claim that honour, but it was in the county town of Nottingham that the chopper was born in 1967



**W**ith its rigid frame, long high backed seat, apehangers and 16-inch front and 20-inch rear wheels, the chopper was just about the coolest thing on the planet.

Before I get rude letters in green crayon re-educating me about the history of custom motorcycling, I should point out – if you haven't already guessed – that I'm referring to the mighty Raleigh Chopper. If you're a certain age, you had one; if you were younger than that certain age, you lusted after one and perhaps that's where one or two of Chopper Club Nottinghamshire began their love affair with chopped motorcycles. I bet at least one member has an example of this iconic red bicycle tucked away in their shed...

Fast forward well over forty years and the chopper is still alive and well in Nottinghamshire, although these versions are a world away from 'THE HoT oNE' (as the Raleigh Chopper was branded, albeit by Raleigh). And the seats have got a whole lot better,

too. Well, most of them. On a surprisingly sunny and warm afternoon, hordes of people turned out for NCC Nottinghamshire's fifth edition of its ever-growing custom show. Held at the rugby union football club in Newark, it proved to be an excellent site with loads of room for both show bikes and parking for lesser mortals, be they on two, three or four wheels. And the presence of an onsite bar was judged to be a pleasant advantage by most people, at least if the constant trade it had was anything by which to judge.

Alas, I've managed to lose the list of who won what, but I know that among the winners were Rab's red flamey 'Turn Back Time' Big Twin and Bri from Chopper Club Jorvik with his beautiful orange and blue Yamaha FJ with one of the most striking goose necked frames you'll ever see, while the Old School trophy went to a Yamaha XS650 with pale blue bodywork and a primrose yellow frame. It sounds odd, but it worked very well. Both Grub from Blackmarket Customs and Paul from NCC





## THE PRESENCE OF AN ONSITE BAR WAS JUDGED TO BE A PLEASANT ADVANTAGE BY MOST PEOPLE, IF THE CONSTANT TRADE WAS ANYTHING BY WHICH TO JUDGE

Norfolk continued remarkable winning years for each of them, for the lovely little silver 'holed tank' Harley and the Martek streetfighter respectively. Best of Show was awarded to a fine looking red and white Harley with springers, although if Yoda had had anything to do with the judging, every trophy – including Best Trike, probably – would have been won by one particular Suzuki 750cc V-twin. Said motorcycle had been reworked in steam punk rat rod style with brass accoutrements, a tank rack and a luggage rack both made of copper plumbing tube and a filler cap resembling something you'd unscrew to get into a submarine. Yoda loved it. In fact, he's considering having some green rosettes made up and giving them out as the Yoda Awards at each show he photographed. This bike would have been festooned with the things.

Once Yoda had been persuaded that there were other bikes to be photographed, the afternoon continued with a perusal of the trade stands and a

listen to local covers band, The Underdogs, a three-piece with a varied approach to their subject matter, ranging from The Monkees to Black Sabbath.

The event was in aid of the Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance, which had brought along its show rig to reiterate what an incredible valuable and worthy resource the Air Ambulance is. May you never have to find out for yourself just how valuable, but always throw whatever you can in the collecting bucket just in case.

It was another fine show, although my only disappointment was the lack of choppers. You know, the real thing – red, three speed gears, T-bar gear shift, sissy bar... ☘



# BACK UP PLAN

**If you want to make a workmanlike custom bike, you need to get your hands on a workmanlike stocker to make it from...**

 **WORDS & PHOTOS: ALIEN4**



**A**nd they don't come much more workmanlike than Kawasaki's rather humdrum ZR-7 basic, do anything, cheap-arsed, mutton-dressed-as-lamb old slogger. No offence, mind.

Basically, and without going into tedious technicality, it's the same old four-cylinder KZ750-engined tugboat that Kawasaki has been punting out in various guises for years. Dead simple, reliable, goes, stops, does everything a motorcycle should – except be particularly exciting. And, above all, it's easy to cut in half.

Nobby's first effort at this chopper malarkey was a fairly radical Hinckley Triple hardtail with loads of handmade one-

off parts by the man himself. On that build, Nobby dived right in at the deep end of the customising pool and taught himself to swim. While he's a highly skilled, fully-qualified mechanic working for a Toyota main dealer and can generally set his hand to most things, he'd never done much in the way of structural welding, never built a frame, never used a lathe and never fabricated anything other than the odd bracket here and there, let alone built a full-on ground-up chop. He has now.

The only problem with building something uncompromising and radical is that the resulting eye-popping piece of visual wonderment is just that – uncompromising and radical.

**ONE DAY, NOBBY WAS STARING AT THE THING OUT OF THE WINDOW AND FIVE MINUTES LATER THE BIKE WAS IN THE SHED**







Yup, you look kool. Yup, you feel kool. You are a veritable prince amongst men, lord of all you survey... Only trouble is, while your rideable piece of jewellery will physically do the miles (and, in the Chopper Club, if it can't, it's not worth having), you'll generally find that you have to put as much work into some sort of removable luggage-rackery to fit all your kit on as into the bike itself. Slinging a blanket over your shoulder 'Confederate Style' and sleeping in the fire doesn't really work these days, and if they gave a 'Best Engineering' trophy to luggage racks, Berkshire Chopper Club would win hands down. Plus, you want something on which to go out for a quick

spin to your mates, head off to a party, go to work, nip down the shops or just for a plain old spin to see if you can remember how to go round corners properly.

No, in this case, what you need is to use your skills to knock up another, more workmanlike article which looks good, yet isn't too precious or spiteful, does everything a motorcycle should, a back up which you can use alongside its more glamorous stablemate. Oh, and this time you'll do it on a tight budget of - ooooh, let's say a grand - and definitely not spend all the holiday money.

This slightly world weary example had ended up in Run Riot Motorcycles' Eton workshop.



Along came Nobby's mate Mace, fully intending 'to get himself back on the road'. Obviously that plan worked well and the bike sat for a year gathering dust (something to do with Mace spending all the rest of his money on guitars) - until he realised he was never going to do anything with it and gave it to Nobby. ●



# SPECIFICATION SHEET

## Engine:

1999 Kawasaki KZ750, Custom Fasteners' bellmouths, uprated clutch springs, modified ignition, modified exhaust system with aluminium end can by owner.

## Frame:

Modified de-lugged Kawasaki twin downtube. One-off rear subframe by owner incorporating battery box.

## Front end:

17" Kawasaki ZR-7 3-spoke wheel, ZR-7 calipers and discs, spacers by owner, Kawasaki ZR-7 forks, slab yokes modified by owner and Run Riot Cycles, Venhill brake lines, one-off handlebars by owner, micro switches and LED idiot lights from Shark Motorcycles and wired by owner, billet clutch and brake levers, ZR-7 mudguard modified to fit by owner, 5" LED Bates-style headlight.

## Rear end:

17" Kawasaki ZR-7 3-spoke wheel, stock ZR-7 swinging arm and shocks, ZR-7 brakes, one-off hugger via M&P, generic LED taillight.

## Miscellaneous:

Modified ZR-7 petrol tank, seat pan by owner and covered by Marty at Smart RRRs, stock wiring loom modified by owner, electrics/battery box integral with subframe, all engineering by owner with assistance from Run Riot Cycles.

## Paint and finish:

Candy blue over silver metalflake and white by Ray. Frame, wheels, etc, powder coated. Polishing by owner.

## Thanks to:

"My wife; my brothers in the NCC; the lads at Run Riot; Ray the painter; Mace for the donor bike; Shark Motorcycles, Hereford; Marty at Smart RRRs and Dave Wood Racing in Aylesbury."



## NOBBY ALSO WIRED IN A PAIR OF THOSE MOST UN-CHOPPER LIKE OF THINGS – HEATED GRIPS! THE GRIPS ARE NCC SUFFOLK'S FAULT...

I said 'easy to cut in half' earlier and that's basically what happened. One day, Nobby was staring at the thing out of the window and five minutes later the bike was in the shed. Off came everything immediately unboltable, out came the angle grinder and onto the scrap pile went the subframe and everything hanging off it. He cleaned up the frame and removed unnecessary lugs and brackets before fabricating a single seat subframe complete with a QD rear section to facilitate – yes! – a one-off luggage rack-cum-backrest. The support loops for the sub-frame were made to accommodate all the electrics once the whole area was boxed in with the heavy gauge steel plate which also serves to provide extra bracing for the frame. Nothing left to chance or made up on the spot here, my friends, unlike in my shed.

Nobby sourced a nice set of slab yokes from eBay for a measly £60, machined them to suit the ZR7 stem and handed them over to Run Riot to have the holes opened out to 41mm to suit the original forks. Back in the shed, he turned up some disc spacers and a new spindle to accommodate the front end's extra width before knocking up some suitably wide and fat drag 'bars with integral risers. The

handlebars were drilled to accept micro switches and idiot lights from Shark Motorcycles, and eBay also provided the 5" 'Bates' LED headlights, brackets, mirrors, billet levers and all the remaining necessary front end furniture. The ball atop the stem-nut that handily holds the sat nav is a door knob...

The engine was left stock, aside from a good service and the addition of a heftier set of clutch springs, a set of bellmouths and the replacement of the end can by a little aluminium end cap with integral 'baffle', turned up in-shed by Nobby.

While the tank looks – and is – mostly stock, a fair bit of cutting, grinding, swearing, smoothing, blending, swearing and welding went into making it blend smoothly into the subframe and seat unit. As regards the two-piece seat, Nobby knocked up the bases, bought all the necessary vinyl, piping and foam, dug out the old sewing machine and was fully intending to do the upholstery himself before changing his mind at the last minute and handing it all over to Marty at Smart RRR's for a professional, stress-free job.

Nobby's quite capable of painting, but it seemed a shame not to take advantage of the paint shop at work, so Good Old Ray ended up staying late. I'll







bet you a pound that's Toyota white. Everything else white was blasted and powder coated, while everything shiny was down to Nobby and his polishing mop. He then spent far too many nights in the shed painstakingly bolting everything together before wiring it up using a modified stock loom. He got all fancy with the ignition department and the bike is now 'armed' with one of those blippers and starts when you pull the front brake lever. While he was at it, he also wired in a pair of those most un-chopper like of things – heated grips! The grips are Suffolk's fault. We all have painful memories of NCC Suffolk's Easter Run when the temperature dropped to -8° overnight and the piss froze in our bladders.

The last—but probably most essential—job was to have Dave Woods Racing set the carbs up on the dyno. You wouldn't believe what that man can get out of a simple Kawasaki 750cc



## THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH BUILDING SOMETHING UNCOMPROMISING AND RADICAL IS THAT THE RESULT IS JUST THAT—UNCOMPROMISING AND RADICAL

four-cylinder motor, just by getting more air to flow through it in an efficient and orderly manner. By the time it came out of Dave's workshop, it was putting out a solid 74bhp at the back wheel and can keep up with a tuned 1200 Bandit up till around ninety. Allegedly.

The bike does everything

Nobby ever wanted it to do; it's comfortable, easy to ride, built to a hair over the original budget, doesn't look like a dog's arse with a hat on and it certainly doesn't hang about. Above all, it was fun to build and, as intended, it admirably performs its primary function of being a useful back-up to its more glamorous companion. ☘





# ROGUES' GALLERY



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Thanks to the lovely people at Fat Maggot ([www.fatmaggot.com](http://www.fatmaggot.com)) the winner of the best pic each month, as chosen by us, will get a £20 voucher to spend at their online shop. Fat Maggot, in case you don't know, do a huge range of biker-orientated T-shirts and stickers with some really good slogans (and some your Mum wouldn't approve of too!).



All Paul Merrett wrote was 'Out of the Asylum Soggiest Biker Oh, it rained' Just nine words and we feel his pain.

This cheery young couple are Gary and Jess Dance of Rolling Art Motorcycles. We'd like to congratulate them on the birth of their first child, Cody. We guess that makes him a Dansette... That's a joke for the older among you.



Steve Allen prepares to repel boarders.

100% Biker freelancer Bosun and his new ride. The bike, not the plane. No-one would ever let Bosun pilot a plane...





**T-SHIRT  
WINNER!**

Kev 'n' Kaz Shaw, Dick 'n' Ruth Tozer, Andy Tozer, Bruce Waitson, Kev Head, Jon Brazier and Michelle Whawell. Yes, they are dressed as monkeys. Sometimes it's best not to know...



One very handsome cat overseeing work in Roy Gilby's Stondon Choppers' workshop.



Bob 'Pugwash' Duhig in the days before he went all odd and started buying Harleys.

Little Eva photobombing a pic of a chopper at the Roughley's Show!



Lyndon Jones having fun practising moto gymkhana on the West Midlands Fire Bike.

Want to see your pics here? Send them to **Rogues Gallery, 100% Biker, 1 Marcher Court, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 6BS** or email them to **editor@100-biker.co.uk**.





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# SUPERMAGGOT

**The world of the supermoto is a strange one. Created by the American 'Superbikers' race series, it was quickly adopted by the French who took to the sport like mussels to garlic**

WORDS & PHOTOS: MDM@FLAT-OUT.COM

**W**hat were, at first, bikes built to suit a demand for a stripped-down nutter bike soon became a world of factory-built, high performance, single cylinder machines. Admittedly, the production machines are still nutter bikes, but they just don't have that individuality any more... Well, except for this one. You'll probably not find a more individual supermoto than Mark Nevitt's Honda...

Mark has always played around with bikes and cars, his list of fettled machinery including Harris-framed bikes, Honda CBX specials, and even Mini cars with engines built using CBX pistons. But, as he had a landmark birthday on the horizon, he wanted to build a bike. A very special bike. In fact, it was going to be the bike languishing in his garage, a Honda CX500 Eurosport. Now, while the V-twin Hondas were very popular in the 1980s amongst high milers and dispatch riders, there's a reason why they gained the nickname of 'Plastic Maggot'. They were never the prettiest of bikes, and most certainly didn't have any kudos, style or sporting pretensions.

Given the way that the CX was received forty years ago, it does seem somewhat ironic – if not a

little strange – that they've now become very popular among people building cafe racers (you can actually buy a full kit to convert a standard CX into a cafe!). But there was no way that Mark was going down that route, feeling, as he does, that the cafe racer side of custom bike building has already been exhausted of variety, certainly as far as V-twin Hondas are concerned, and that it was high time that someone did something totally different with a CX.

For inspiration, he needed to go no further than his own shed, wherein stood a Rotax-engined CCM 604 supermoto. A shaft-driven, water-cooled, transverse vee isn't the first engine you'd consider to use for a supermoto, which was exactly the reason why Mark thought it was a good idea! While it initially appears that the Honda motor was simply transplanted into the CCM chassis, that's not so. The frame is actually the original Honda loop, although it did have to be modified. Heavily modified. The outer rails were removed, a 2-inch box section added to the headstock – which itself has had the upper outer bearing race offset machined to bring the geometry back in – the main spine was rewelded and the engine outriggers cut and rewelded! Each frame rail was cut

**AS MARK HAD A LANDMARK BIRTHDAY ON THE HORIZON, HE WANTED TO BUILD A BIKE. A VERY SPECIAL BIKE. IN FACT, IT WAS GOING TO BE THE BIKE LANGUISHING IN HIS GARAGE, A HONDA CX500 EUROSPORT...**











out and replaced, one at a time, so as not to upset the frame geometry, but Mark is most pleased with how the tank sits, lining up perfectly with the cylinder heads. With a CCM subframe modified to bolt on to the back of the Honda main frame, all of the off-road style bodywork from the supermoto was in place.

The front end is, essentially, a complete set-up from the Blackburn-built supermoto – the standard bike had some surprisingly high spec components fitted as standard, such as the

Paioli forks and Brembo brakes. The fork legs were fitted with a pair of Bimota pre-load adjusters, while a Talon caliper bracket allows use of a dinner plate-sized 320mm diameter brake disc.

At the rear, a considerable amount of work was required in order to get the shaft drive swinging arm and associated wheel matched up with the 17-inch spoked front. The swinging arm had all the original bracing and bracketry for the Honda Prolink suspension removed and replaced with the mounts needed for the WP shock. The hub was cut out of the centre of the Honda wheel, and sent to Ian Saxoburgh at Cafe Racer Kits who made the hub brackets that house the holes for the stainless spokes and the wheel was then built by Jones Restoration Services in Chester, complete with a 17-inch Morad alloy rim and a 130

section Conti tyre.

While the engine remains internally standard, it did have its breathing improved by a pair of Emgo airfilters and a home-brewed exhaust system. The exhaust was created using the original Motad system, with the header pipes cut back by three-quarters of an inch to bring them inline with the radiator. A Y-piece from an old Mark 3 Escort was used to link the pipes under the carbs, while the twisty part of the pipe is off a classic Mini and at the end is the CCM's silencer.

A neat touch (that also helps with useability) is the hydraulic clutch conversion that Mark has fitted. Originally intended for a Yamaha WR400, the Magura kit was fitted in no more than fifteen minutes and is a very unobtrusive installation.

The riding position was finalised by using the CCM footpegs, mounted a whole four inches further forward than the standard Honda pegs. The peg position was calculated by studying online pictures of



**EACH FRAME RAIL WAS CUT OUT AND THEN REPLACED, ONE AT A TIME, SO AS NOT TO UPSET THE FRAME GEOMETRY**





## MANY PEOPLE WALK PAST THE HONDA AND THEN REALISE THAT IT ISN'T ACTUALLY THE BIKE THEY FIRST THOUGHT IT WAS

supermos, and then asking an ex-motocrosser mate to check that they were in something like the right place.

Mark admits that the painting and detailing seemed to take forever but, as he wanted a finish that was comparable to a factory-built machine, it was a necessary task. I can personally vouch for the fact that many people walk past the Honda with only a glance, but then stop in their tracks and take a second look, suddenly realising that it isn't actually the production bike that they first thought it was. The original bike cost Mark £350; he sold various original standard parts for £300, and the work on the back wheel, plus various other parts, added up to a grand total of about £1700. For the level of attention that the bike gets, that's a bargain. But the cost – or lack of – is pretty irrelevant, as Mark

states that he'll never sell it!

And yes, it does ride very well indeed. The horrendously high centre of gravity, for which the original CX was renowned, has all but disappeared, and low speed stability has been attained. It's perhaps a little hard on the suspension, but then Mark's a bigger bloke than me, and while it hasn't got the bottom end punch that a standard CCM has (mostly thanks to its lighter engine and drive train), the 500cc V-twin has lovely midrange drive, is much smoother than the Rotax single, and it sounds ace, too! And no, it's not what would first spring to mind when you hear the term 'custom-built motorcycle' but, as we said earlier, as far as unique and interesting motorcycles go, I think it's highly unlikely that you're ever going to see one the same as this... ☒

## SPECIFICATION SHEET

### Engine:

Honda CX500 80° V-twin, re-jetted standard carbs, Emgo air filters, Magura hydraulic clutch conversion, one-off exhaust by owner with CCM silencer, repositioned/rewelded gear lever.

### Frame:

1982 Honda CX500 Eurosport, heavily modified, modified CCM rear subframe and brackets welded, CCM footrests moved 4" forward with home-built brackets.

### Front end:

17" Morad rim on AJP hub, 320mm disc, Brembo twin piston caliper with Talon bracket, Goodridge brake lines, CCM Paioli forks, Bimota fork top adjusters, CCM yokes, Renthal bars, Magura clutch master cylinder, Brembo brake master cylinder, Honda switchgear, Koso digital clocks from Digital Speedos, alloy clock bracket by owner, covered in M3 carbon fibre sheet, CCM/Acerbis mudguard, 12 volt kitchen bulbs in Acerbis headlight fairing.

### Rear end:

Standard Honda swinging arm with Pro-link suspension removed and strengthened for the rear shock, WP shock, Honda disc, Brembo caliper on Honda hanger, Honda hub modified by CRK built onto 17" Morad rim by Jones Restoration Services, 130 section Continental tyre, CCM/Acerbis mudguard, CCM taillight.

### Miscellaneous:

CCM/Acerbis side panels, CCM petrol tank, CCM seat, modified Honda loom and ignition switch.

### Paint and finish:

CCM plastic yellow. Frame painted by owner.

### Paint and finish:

"Cherie my lovely wife; a very good mate, Robin Sims of RMS Industrial Doors for all the metal and the use of his workshop; Paul Alcock for everything (welding, van use and being a good mate for all these years); Ian at CRK; the lads at Jones Restoration Services and flat-out.com for the photo shoot."







WORDS: JOHN MILTON PHOTOS: INIGO ABRIL

# CUSTOMFEST

## CIRCUIT RICARDO TORMO, VALENCIA, SPAIN

Although it's a new event—only in its second year—Spain's CustomFest already holds the promise of becoming one of the best events on the Iberian Peninsula



CustomFest is held in Valencia, the country's third largest city and one of Spain's major tourist areas thanks to its ancient winding streets that date back to Roman times and a wealth of historical monuments, art galleries and museums. Add to that its many cultural events (including massive tomato fights, although I'm not sure that counts), pleasant climate and the fact that this was the birthplace of paella, and it's little surprise that many bikers already visit Valencia.

Bikers for Bikers decided to capitalise upon this 'Spanish Daytona' effect and give people an event to which to flock. To paraphrase the infamous 'Field Of Dreams' quote, 'if you build it, they will come', and come they did in their thousands. By the second year, BfB found that it needed a bigger venue and so it moved the event to the Circuit Ricardo Tormo, an international race track where Formula 1 teams often test their cars and which

host FIM MotoGP events—the circuit was named in 1998 as a tribute to two-time Grand Prix world champion motorcycle racer, Ricardo Tormo who lost his life not on a motorcycle, but to leukaemia.

As well as hosting the obligatory bike show, CustomFest also booked a huge array of stands, many of them with a custom—or kustom—focus, showcasing pinstripping, leather workers, artists and tattooists. It was, the organisers believe, the biggest gathering of such traders ever seen in Spain. Throughout the weekend there were live displays of their craftsmanship, whether airbrushing on leather or showing the old decorative techniques perfected by gun engravers. Even some of the entrants in the impressive one hundred-strong bike show took the opportunity to have just a little more done to their build by some of the artisans on site. Although this show is, as previously mentioned, only in its second year, it attracted some of the very





**ALTHOUGH THIS SHOW IS ONLY IN ITS SECOND YEAR, IT ATTRACTED SOME OF THE VERY BEST SPANISH BUILDERS, AS WELL AS ONE OR TWO FROM FURTHER AFIELD**





**TO PARAPHRASE THE INFAMOUS 'FIELD OF DREAMS' QUOTE, 'IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME', AND COME THEY DID IN THEIR THOUSANDS**



best Spanish builders, as well as one or two from further afield. Street Drag Nimes, no stranger to the winner's podium, travelling south from France, taking back the best Modified Harley-Davidson trophy for their pains, while this year's Best of Show went to Violet Motorcycles from Spain.

Although the bike show was the deserved focus of attention, there was much to do away from both that display or if your wallet was starting to panic as it was drained in the cause of so many cool things to buy. Bouncy castles and a mechanical bull were installed for the enjoyment of the smaller person, although the latter seemed to be quite popular with the adults, most of whom couldn't stay on the frisky machine as long as their kids. If that was a little too energetic, then you could simply relax in the sunshine with a glass of beer and listen to the live rock bands. It's a strange thing, but English is the universal language of rock and even Spanish groups who struggle to put together a sentence in English confidently sing in the language. And, of course, there was paella. It wouldn't be Valencia without paella.



Some 5000 people passed through the gates of the Circuit Ricardo Tormo and the result was a lively weekend with a festive atmosphere. A number of the traders remarked upon how laidback it seemed, and a fair few went home with new friends as well as customers. If you're considering a visit to a European event this year, you could do far worse than CustomFest. It's held at the beginning of October when the weather is still sunny and warm but not oppressive and, as equally important, when the main holiday season is drawing to a close and so air fares begin to drop. However, because Valencia is such a popular Spanish destination, it also means that the budget airlines such as Ryanair and Easyjet include it on their routes. Don't forget to try the paella. It's the law. ☘



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## HOW TO FRAME THE QUESTION: PART 7



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3

Last month I talked about bending tube and how to locate the bends. I also looked at making the top tube and seat rail assembly, of which I then forgot to include a picture (Fig.1). The point about this assembly is that it only has a single plane; 'plane' in this context meaning imaginary surface. Basically, if you can lie it flat on a table or the floor, it's single plane.

The lower rails of the frame, however, are a different matter (Fig.2) because the bends where the rails kick up to meet the axle plates have to 'point' in a different direction from the bends that meet the down tube. In other words, they are double or multi-plane. The problem is accurately measuring the angle between the planes, which in tube bending terms is known as the 'rotation'.

There are two basic methods to measure the rotation between

**THERE ARE TWO BASIC METHODS TO MEASURE THE ROTATION BETWEEN BENDS – WHICH TO USE DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES AT HAND**

bends – which to use depends entirely on the circumstances at hand. Building the frame with the lower rails parallel to each other and spacing them apart so that the kick ups to the axle plates can lie on a vertical plane makes things as straightforward as it gets. Whichever method is used to measure the rotation, the general approach is to bend the front of the frame rail first. For a twin downtube frame, there's no need to mitre the frame rail into the steering head at this point. It can be spaced outwards by its own diameter where it runs along the jig, and then leant against the steering head, effectively spacing it outwards by its own diameter there, too, so that it 'leans' in at

the correct angle. With a single downtube frame, it's best to mitre the down-tube into the steering head and then mitre the rails into that (Fig.3) to establish the correct angle. It's a little obvious, but it should still be pointed out that more than one bend in a single bend will still require the rotation to be checked...

Because this frame is being built so that the rear kick up lies on the vertical plane, and the bender is always set up so that it is either horizontal or vertical, what I need to know is the angle of the plane that the front bend lies on relative to the vertical. The method I normally use is to place a piece of flat steel plate on the bend and use an angle finding



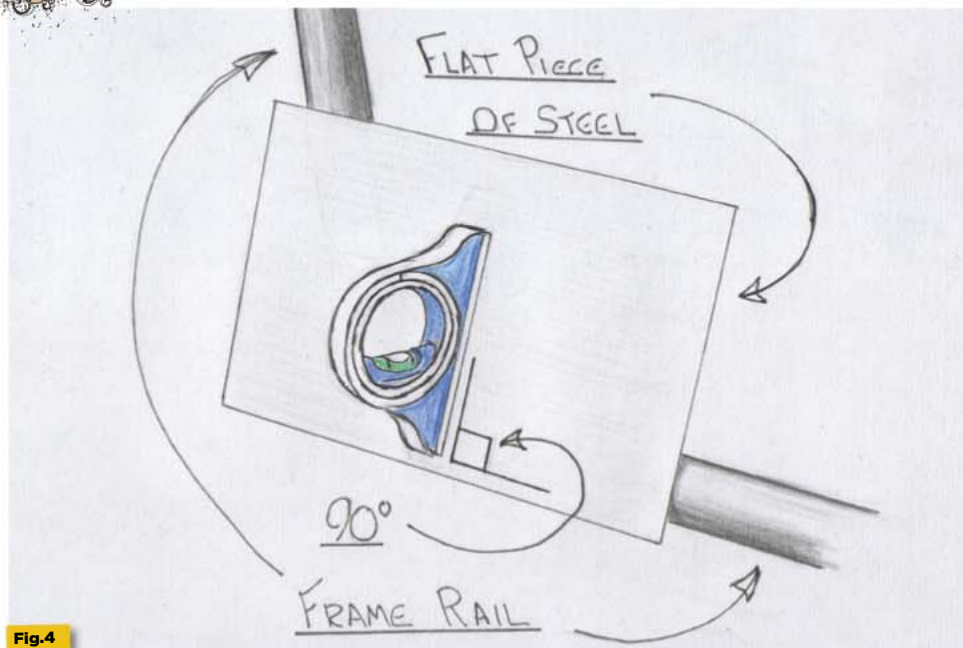


Fig.4



Fig.6



Fig.5



Fig.7

## IT'S SENSIBLE PRACTICE TO START OUT BY BENDING THE LOWER RAILS FIRST, ESPECIALLY FOR TWIN TUBE FRAMES SINCE ANY INCORRECTLY BENT TUBES CAN USUALLY BE CUT UP TO PROVIDE THE SEAT RAILS

level to measure the angle (**Fig.4**). In this case, though, there isn't room for the steel plate, so I used the other method which is to make a tool from a small piece of angle iron and 6 inches or so of strap steel that can be hose clipped to the frame rail (**Fig.5**). Once it's in place (**Fig.6**) it can be adjusted so that it is level, putting it at 90 degrees to the plane of the bend in this case.

Once the bend line has been marked (using the homemade angle finder to mock the bend angle up and the reference bend to find the location of the bend line), the rail is transferred to the

bender, the bend line aligned, and everything clamped up. Using the steel plate and angle finder, the front bend is set to the appropriate angle; if it was 10 degrees off of the vertical, then 10 degrees off of the horizontal in the case of (**Fig.7**). It's important to remember to bend a pair of frame rails using this method, ie, one rotated up, one down, and not two left or two right hand ones.

Where a tool is used, then everything is set up on the bender as before and set so the tool is correctly orientated (**Fig.8**), again taking care to end up with a pair of frame rails, but also ensuring

the tool isn't knocked out of position while handling the tube.

With a twin downtube frame, the downtubes can obscure the exhaust ports, requiring a slight bend in the tube to allow it to 'dog leg' clear of those ports. Notice how in (**Fig.9**) that, while the downtube is clearing the exhaust ports, it is nowhere near the steering head. Where that's the case, the dog leg bend should be made before the rear kick up bend since it will affect the rotation of that, and special care taken to make sure that the dog leg bends are at the correct (normally 90 degree) rotation to the bends at the transition from the lower rails to the downtubes. As long as the lower rails are parallel to each other, and the plane of the kick up to the axle plate is vertical, then generally everything will fall into place without too many surprises. That said, it's sensible practice to start out by bending the lower rails first, especially for twin tube frames since any incorrectly bent tubes can usually be cut up to provide the seat rails and/or cross tubes, while the length of





Fig.8

untouched tube is often enough to allow for a second attempt.

For wide tyre frames, things are rather more complicated and generally involve a lot of mocking up and careful measurement (**Fig.10**) but essentially the same two techniques described earlier are used. For production frames on which the rails are bent on manually operated machines, then all the information for the cut length of the tube, the position of the bend lines, the angle setting for each bend and the rotations between them should be written down somewhere. All this information will have been arrived at by trial and error. Attempting to emulate the look without at least some experience in tube manipulation is liable to be expensive in terms of material. Using some cheaper tube of the same diameter as the intended frame rails (as in Fig.10) to mock everything up will provide the cut length and bend line positions, but is unlikely to provide an accurate figure for the angle setting on the bender (cheaper thin wall tube will spring back less), though it will at least provide an angle for the finished bend. Errors in making the mock up can be corrected by cutting it up and altering lengths and rotations before welding it back together as long as a careful note is made of the amount cut out or welded in, and the notes amended accordingly.

Another useful dodge is to make the lower frame rails in two



Fig.9

**WITH A TWIN DOWNTUBE FRAME, THE DOWNTUBES CAN OBSCURE THE EXHAUST PORTS, REQUIRING A SLIGHT BEND IN THE TUBE TO ALLOW IT TO 'DOG LEG' CLEAR OF THOSE PORTS**

halves, and have an internally sleeved joint supported by the main frame cross tube. This not only allows the rotation between the two halves to be adjusted before the joint is welded but it may make errors less wasteful. Internal sleeves for unsupported joints should be tubular and have a wall thickness matching that of the tube being joined; for a supported joint like the one just described, then a solid sleeve should be acceptable. Either way, the sleeve should be a sliding fit and have a length of around two and a half to three times the diameter of the tube being joined. The tube itself should be bevelled for the weld where it

butts together, leaving a small root gap so the sleeve is welded too, and cross drilled and plug welded to the sleeve. Constructed in this way, subsequent sanding of the welds flush shouldn't cause any loss of strength and, with care, the joint will be invisible.

In the next issue, how to cut tube mitres without the aid of a safety net. ☒



Fig.10



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WORDS: BLUE PHOTOS: CONN OSBORNE



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This was a build that showed how it was possible for even the greenest amateur (and Gareth admits he was that man) to modify

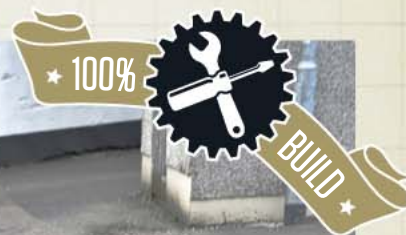
and customise a bike using the most basic of tools and a good reference manual. We realise that not everyone has the experience or the confidence or the facilities to, for example, build their own frame or undertake a ground-up build, but the grand thing about custom bikes is you don't have to; the important thing is to create something which you love and which is yours. That's just what Gareth did. And he did a damn fine job, too. ☘

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### MARCH

**12th March:** And every Thursday thereafter. Bike Night at the New Inn, 498 Littlemoor, Preston, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 5NY. Hot food, pool table, rock disco. 7pm-late.

**13th March:** Uncle Ben's Fundraising Night at the Shifnal War Memorial Club, Innage Road, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8AD. £3 on the door. 7pm-midnight. For details, ring 07710 667308 or 01952 270015. In aid of Armed Forces Bikers.

**13th March:** And every Friday thereafter. Bikers Night at the Whitwell & Reepham

Railway, Whitwell Road, Reepham, Norfolk NR10 4GA. Beer, barbecue cakes, tea and coffee. Ring 01603 871694 or email [infor@whitwellstation.com](mailto:infor@whitwellstation.com).

**14th March:** Salutation MCC's Charity Party at the Birch Coppice Sports & Social Club, Watling Street, Dordon, Staffs B78 1SY. Live music, food, free camping. £5 on the door. 200 limit. Ring 07818 485265 or 07966 540962.

**14th March:** Shamrock Rose MCC's 3rd Wet The Shamrock Rally at Inniscarra Community Centre, Cloghroe, Blarney, Co Cork. Bike and trike show, live bands, stands, tattooist, 24hr food, secure parking, free soup on arrival. 10 euros entry or 12 euros including rally patch.

**14th March:** Ribcrackers' Soapbox Derby at Lumb Farm, Derby Road, Marehay, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 8JN. Soapbox racing, trophies, band and rock disco in evening, £10 per team of 3 racers. Spectators £5. For details, ring Vicky on 07824 997779.

**14th March:** Exiles Cumbria MCC's Help For Heroes Rock Night at Club Rock, Unit 7, Englishgate Plaza, Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1RP. 8pm start. For details, see [www.exiles-cumbria.co.uk](http://www.exiles-cumbria.co.uk).

**14th March:** St Patrick's Party at the Rockbar, Shobnall Sports & Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton on Trent, Staffs DE14 2BB. Live music, rock disco, Irish theme fancy dress, food, camping, cheap beer.

£5. For details, ring 07761 931226 or 07988 521400 or visit [www.unwantedmcc.co.uk](http://www.unwantedmcc.co.uk).

**14th March:** Northern Cross MCC's Party Night at Crossflatts Cricket Club, Ryshworth Park, Crossflatts, Bingley, West Yorks BD16 2ER. Live music, raffle, buffet supper and curry. £5 including supper. For details ring 07948 553249 or visit [www.northerncrossmcc.co.uk](http://www.northerncrossmcc.co.uk).


**14th March:** York Auction Centre Autojumble at York Auction Centre, Murton Lane, Murton, North Yorks YO19 5GF. 8am-1pm. Stalls from £10. Public entry free. Ring 01904 489731 or visit [www.ylc.co.uk](http://www.ylc.co.uk).

**15th March:** Original Cruisers Easter Egg Run. Leaving from the Railway Club, Sussex Road, Southport PR9 0SH at 12-noon to run to Springbrook Children's Home, Meadow Lane, Southport, Merseyside PR8 3RS. Please bring an Easter egg.

**15th March:** Sidecar Sunday at the Ace Café, Stonebridge Park, London NW10 7UD. More info from 0208 961 1000 or visit [www.ace-cafe-london.com](http://www.ace-cafe-london.com).

**17th March:** And every Tuesday thereafter. Bike Night at the Pinewood Bar and Café, Unit 8, Pinewood Leisure Centre, Old Wokingham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 3AQ. 7pm start. Hot meals until 9pm. Ring 01344 778543.

**17th March:** And every Tuesday thereafter. Bike Night at the Pit Stop Diner, Bowesfield Lane, Stockton on Tees TS18 3HJ. 5-9pm. Ring 01642 or visit [www.thepitstopdiner.co.uk](http://www.thepitstopdiner.co.uk).

  
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**18th March:** Performance & Streetbike Night at Culture Motorcycles, Thorne Way, Woolsbridge Industrial Estate, Three Legged Cross, Dorset BH21 6FB. Ring 01202 929119.

**18th March:** And every Wednesday thereafter. Biker Night at the Station Café, Station Road, Alton, Hampshire GU34 2PZ. Home cooked food. 5pm start. Ring 01420 82205 or email [cyau@gmail.com](mailto:cyau@gmail.com).

**20-22nd March:** Well Oiled MCC's 4th Oil Ya Nuts Rally at Adlington Cricket Club, Huyton Road, Adlington, Lancashire PR7 4HD. Live bands, trade stands, caterer, silly games, free hugs, trophies, raffle, real toilets and showers. £12 prebook or £15 on the gate. 150 limit. For details ring 07779 286558. Tickets (with SAE and phone number) from Mike Laffo, 1 Castlefield, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9BQ or ring 07725 859239. Cars BPA only.

  
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**20-22nd March:** KKS69 MCC's Black Pig Frolic VII at Brighton Ferry, Brighton, Bubwith, Selby YO8 6DH. £12 prebook or £15 on the gate. For details, ring 07816 036804 or see 'Black Pig Rally' on Facebook.

**21st March:** Brothers Over The Hill MCC's Come As You Are One Nighter at Amber Valley Rugby Club, Lower Somercotes, Derbyshire DE55 4NQ. Rock disco, late bar, free buffet, free raffle ticket, camping. £2 on the door. Ring 07837 118516 or 07557 539465.

**21st March:** Kempton Park Motorcycle Jumble at Kempton Park Racecourse, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex TW16 5AQ. £6 on the gate. 10am start. Outside pitches £34, inside £28. For details, call 01344 883961 or 07796 136203 or visit [www.egp-enterprises.co.uk](http://www.egp-enterprises.co.uk).

**21st March:** LGPAFO BC's March Mayhem Madness Rock Nite at Falkirk Rugby Club, Dorrator Road, Camelon, Falkirk FK2 7YW. Live band, disco, camping. £5 on the door. Ring 07780 118229 or 07429 276225 or email [lgpafo@googlemail.com](mailto:lgpafo@googlemail.com).

**21st March:** Scorton Car & Bike Autojumble at Scorton Events centre, Scorton, nr Catterick, North Yorkshire DL10 6EH. 8am-1pm.

**21st March:** Medway Natives MCC's 3rd Anniversary Party at the Coach & Horses, London Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3PA. 8pm till midnight. Ring 07415 230346.

**21-22nd March:** Dregs MCC's Spring Party at Meadow Club, Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3HJ. Live music and disco. 8pm-

1am. £5 on the door. Email [ginmonster@dregs-mcc.com](mailto:ginmonster@dregs-mcc.com).

**22nd March:** Star Bikers' 37th Egg Run. Leaving from Britannia Stadium, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs ST4 4EG at 11am and run to the King's Hall, Stoke-on-Trent. Entry £2 per bike plus Easter egg. Refreshments and bar available. Ring 01782 414831 or visit [www.stokebikeruns.co.uk](http://www.stokebikeruns.co.uk).

**22nd March:** Wirral Egg Run Tribute Ride Out. Meet at 8am to leave at 11am from the Dips, Kings Parade, New Brighton, Wirral, Merseyside CH45 3PZ to ride to Claremont Farm, Old Clatterbridge Road, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 4JB. For details, ring 07984 622423.

**22nd March:** Coastal Club's Easter Egg Run. Leaving from Wheels Motorcycles, First Drove, Fengate, Peterborough, Cambs PE1 5BJ at 10am to run to RAF Marham. Please bring Easter egg. For info, ring 07526 316950.

**22nd March:** Huddersfield Autojumble, Old Market Building, Brook Street, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 1RG. Stalls 7am. Customers 10am. Stalls £20. Entry £2.50. Ring 01773 819154 or email [jeffpff@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jeffpff@hotmail.co.uk).

**22nd March:** Wirral Egg Run. Leaving from the Dips, Kings Parade, New Brighton, Merseyside at 11am. For details, email [tony2tellys@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:tony2tellys@blueyonder.co.uk).

**22nd March:** Wakefield MAG's 6th Charity Dog Food Run. Leaving from the Redbeck Café, Doncaster Road, Crofton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 1RT at 9.30am to ride to Wakefield district dog rescues. Please bring quality tinned or dry dog food, chews, treat, dog collars, leads, old towels, etc. For details, visit [wakefield-mag-uk.org](http://wakefield-mag-uk.org).

**25th March:** Classic Bike Night at Culture Motorcycles, Thorne Way, Woolsbridge

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Industrial Estate, Three Legged Cross, Dorset BH21 6FB. Ring 01202 929119.

**27-29th March:** Beermongers MCC's Hand Pulled Rally at Ripon Racecourse, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 1UG. Live music, DJ, stalls, camping, 24-hour showers and toilets, drink on arrival. £15 prebook only. 300 limit. For tickets, ring 01423 529255 or visit [www.beermongers-mcc.org.uk](http://www.beermongers-mcc.org.uk).

**28th March:** Setantii MCC's Blackpool Egg Run. Meet at South Pier, Blackpool, Lancashire FY4 1BB to leave at 12-noon for Victoria Hospital, Whinney Hey Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR and Brian House Children's Hospice, Low Moor Road, Bispham, Blackpool FY2 0BG. Bring an Easter egg or a donation. All welcome.

**28th March:** Medusa WMC's Quiz Night at the Flying Horse, Boughton Aluph, Ashford, Kent TN25 4HH. 7pm start. £2 entry. More details at [www.medusamotorcycleclub.co.uk](http://www.medusamotorcycleclub.co.uk).

**28th March:** Stone Cross MCC's Charity Rock Nite at the Beehive, Brickhouse Lane, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 0DR. Live band, free buffet, children welcome. 8pm start.

**28th March:** Lincoln Autojumble at Hangar

Number One, Former RAF Base, Hemswell, Lincs DN21 5TJ. Pitches from £10. Free admission. £2 car parking. 6.30am-12.30pm. For info ring 07816 291544 or visit [www.lincolnautojumble.com](http://www.lincolnautojumble.com).

**28-29th March:** Manchester Bike Show at Event City, Manchester M41 7TB. 9.30am-5pm. £13 prebook or £16 on the door. For more details, visit [www.manchesterbikeshow.com](http://www.manchesterbikeshow.com).

**28-29th March:** Kickback: The National Custom Motorcycle Show at Stoneleigh Park, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire CV8 2LG. The Custom Bike Building National Championships, displays, stalls, artists and much more. £15 prebook for weekend or £10 each day on the door. Onsite camping available by ringing 02476 696969. Visit [www.thecustomshow.com](http://www.thecustomshow.com) or email [lorne@rwrw.co.uk](mailto:lorne@rwrw.co.uk).

25yrs is a long time. This promises to be a good one.

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**28-29th March:** South Wales Classic & Modern Motorcycle Show & Autojumble at Llanishen High School, Heol Hir, Cardiff CF14 5YL.

**29th March:** Charity Motorcycle Ride for Action on Addiction. Leaving Oxford Court, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 0GH at 10.30am to ride to Exmouth seafront. In support of Clouds House in Shaftesbury.

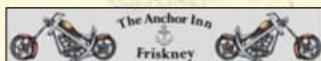
**29th March:** Squire's Easter Egg Run. Leaving from Squires Café Bar, Newthorpe Lane, Newthorpe, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS25 5LX at 11am to run to Yorkshire Children's Centre. L-plate friendly route. For info, ring Chris on 07906 202655.

**29th March:** Nottingham TOMCC's 25th Bottesford Egg Run. Leaving from the Red Lion, Grantham Road, Bottesford, Notts NG13 0ED at 11am to run to Melton Mowbray. All bikes and scooters welcome. Please bring an Easter egg. More info on 01780 762531 or 07790 583082.

**29th March:** And every Sunday thereafter. Afternoon Bikers Meet at the Warley Cross Café, Brandesburton, Driffield, East Yorks YO25 8EW.

**29th March:** Straightliners at Santa Pod Raceway, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA. For more details, ring 01484 718164 or visit [www.santapod.co.uk](http://www.santapod.co.uk).

**29th March:** Raleigh Chopper Meet at the Ace Café, Stonebridge Park, London NW10 7UD. More info from 0208 961 1000 or visit [www.ace-cafe-london.com](http://www.ace-cafe-london.com).



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## APRIL

**1st April:** Harley Night at Culture Motorcycles, Thorne Way, Woolsbridge Industrial estate, Three Legged Cross, Dorset BH21 6FB. Ring 01202 929119.

**1st April:** Barbecue Bike Night at the Willows Garden Centre, Gainsborough Road, Glenham, Market Rasen, Lincs LN8 2EG. 5-9pm.

**1st April:** And every Wednesday thereafter. Biker Night at the Station Café, Station Road, Alton, Hampshire GU34 2PZ. Home cooked food. 5pm start. Ring 01420 82205 or email [cyau@gmail.com](mailto:cyau@gmail.com).

**1st April:** And every Wednesday thereafter. Bike night at the All Seasons Café, Billing Garden Village, The Causeway, Great Billing, Northants NN3 9EX. 6pm start. Ring 01604 404226 or visit [www.allseasonscafe.co.uk](http://www.allseasonscafe.co.uk).

**1st April:** And every Wednesday thereafter. Bike Night at the Moth and Lantern, Town Street, Cottam, Notts DN22 0EU. 5pm start. Hog roast, barbecue.

**2nd April:** And every Thursday thereafter. Bike Night at the Iron Horse Ranch House, High Street, Market Deeping, Cambs PE6 8EB. Food and drink, all welcome. 6.30-11pm.

**2nd April:** And every Thursday thereafter. Bikers Night at the Warley Cross Café, Brandesburton, Driffield, East Yorks YO25 8EW.

**2nd April:** And every Thursday thereafter. Bike Night at the New Inn, 498 Little Moor, Preston, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 5NY. Hot food, pool table, rock disco. 7pm-late.

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**3rd April:** Bike Night at Jacks Hill Café, Watling Street, Towcester, Northants NN12 8ET.

**3rd April:** And every Friday thereafter. Bikers Night at the Whitwell & Reephams Railway, Whitwell Road, Reephams, Norfolk NR10 4GA. Beer, barbecue cakes, tea and coffee. Ring 01603 871694 or email [infor@whitwellstation.com](mailto:infor@whitwellstation.com).

**3rd April:** Thames Vale Vultures's Berkshire Egg Run. Leaving Autotech Carpark, Norcot Industrial Estate, Norcot Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 6HW at 12.30pm to ride to Abbey Rugby Club, Rose Hill, Peppard Road, Reading RG4 8XA. For details, ring 07800 758017 or visit [www.tvvultures.co.uk](http://www.tvvultures.co.uk).

**3rd April:** Tsunami Riders MCC's Let Loose Rally at Old Elthamians Rugby Club, Foxbury Avenue, Off Perry Street, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6HA. More details to follow or visit [www.tsunamiriders.org.uk](http://www.tsunamiriders.org.uk).

**3-5th April:** North West Harley Club's Easter Eggstravaganza at Adlington Cricket Club, Huyton Road, Adlington, Chorley, Lancashire PR7 4HD. Live music, Saturday Egg Run, auction raffle, 24hr toilets and showers, camping. £10 on the gate. For info, ring 0151 722 8940 or 07752 400734.

**3-5th April:** XXXX Crew MCC's Easter X Rally at the Bebside Inn, Front Street, Blyth, Northumberland NE24 4HT. Live music, hot food. £3 camping. No fires. No glass on site.

**3-5th April:** Festival of Power at Santa Pod Raceway, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants

NN29 7XA. For more details, ring 01234 782828 or visit [www.santapod.co.uk](http://www.santapod.co.uk).

**3-5th April:** Roadrunners, Revellers and Get Knotted MCC's Three Tribes Easter Rally Cannock Cricket & Hockey Club, The Morris Ground, Church Lane, Cannock, Staffs WS11 1RR. Bike show, live music, rock disco, trade stands, raffle, trophies, games, three bars. £15 prebook or £20 on the gate. Tickets (cheques payable to Three Tribes Easter Rally) from 24 Dorset Road, Heath Hayes, nr Cannock, Staffs WS12 2EF. For more info, ring Jacqui on 07581 204766 or lan on 07891 031365 or email [i.forkin@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:i.forkin@hotmail.co.uk).

**4th April:** Adrenalin Motorcycles Open Day at Unit M3b, Durban Road, Bognor Regis, Sussex PO22 9QT. See the new workshops, hog roast. 12-noon start. For details visit [adrenalinmc.co.uk](http://adrenalinmc.co.uk).

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**STRICTLY: NO CARS, NO VANS, NO PEDESTRIANS - NO EXCUSES**  
No Colours to be worn on site please  
No glass allowed on site

\*Web and phone close 24/07/15,  
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# No Bull 7th Just Beer & Bike Rally

**28-29-30-31  
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@ PENMAENAU FARM  
BUILTH WELLS

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**RELIANT TRIKE:** 850cc. Selling as project. It's all done and has 9 months MoT. Need to sell for next project. Will tell you anything about it. £1200. Ring 07982 603182. (Worcs)



**YAMAHA XJR1200:** 1996. Black. Gold flames. Wave brake discs front and back. Remus 4-into-1 full stainless exhaust. Goodridge lines. Dyno'd. Much more. £3500. Ring 07903 830704. (Hampshire)



**HARLEY-DAVIDSON TRIKE:** 1980. Ironhead Sportster 1000cc. Recent top end rebuild. Not Q plate. Can be converted back to 2 wheels. £6000. Ring 07788 855616. (Essex)



**THE MANTIS:** 2009. One-off custom motorcycle. RevTech 110 cui with diamond cutting edge, twin IDF dual throat carbs, 10" over forks, 280 rear wheel. Candy green paint, engraving and gold plating. complete one-off build by Lucky Buck's Custom cycles. £40,000. Ring 07528 311608. (Camps)



**HARLEY SOFTAIL CLASSIC:** 1999. 59,663 miles. MoT to Nov 2015. Partial service history. Deep seat, saddle bags, wide bars, high risers, skull & crossbones side stand, flamed tank panel, custom air filter, custom rear indicators, flame spots, wide rim headlight, touring screen, alarm. Nearly new tyres. Extra set of Fatbob tanks. £5250. Ring 07951 028528. (Lancashire)

**YAMAHA VIRAGO TRIKE:** 700cc. 1985. Reliant axle. Immaculate condition. Reason for selling is I'm starting a new project. £4250. Ring 07906 625580 or 01752 209445. (Devon)



**HARLEY IRONHEAD CHOPPER:** Built by So Low Choppers. MoT to July. Completely rebuilt engine, refurbished gearbox, new clutch, S&S Super E. Nearly new tyres. Custom metal flake paint. Very rideable, head-turning, low maintenance bike. I rode this bike to Germany and back. Recently revamped so new for this show season! £6500. Ring 01359 253600. (Suffolk)



**CUSTOM BUILT BUELL CAFÉ RACER:** Buell 1200cc Cyclone V-twin. Mot'd. One-off aluminium petrol tank, custom made seat in quilted tan leather, one-off handmade aluminium tailpiece. Pinstriping and artwork by Nefarious. £6950. Ring 07920 756381. (Surrey)



**HARLEY V-ROD LANDSPEED/DRAE BIKE:** 2003. Developed for attempt on British Landspeed record. Carbon fibre aerodynamic package included. Around £75k spent in cash. Comes complete with a vast array of spares, components, tools, software and data that are required to run and manage a machine like this. Nothing comparable on either side of the Atlantic. No time wasters of tyre kickers, please. £17,500. Ring 07826 553420. (Avon)

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# VOTING MATTERS

I'm sure many of you out there have seen the massive number of e-petitions that are doing the rounds on social media sites. They cover everything from saving the NHS to protests against people who buy a house near a racetrack/church/music venue and then complain to get said venue shut down. Each of those petitions attracts, on average, around 40,000 electronic signatures, so you would hope that our voices will get heard.

And guess what? Signing them is a total waste of time. The system now operates in the same fashion for electronic petitions as for those on paper, in that one piece of paper is one complaint, no matter how many signatures—meaning paper petitions are relatively ineffective. The ease with which e-petitions can be set up on the government's official site also opens it to abuse and lighthearted motions; eg, 'Outlaw Toilet Attendants' (justification 'no-one wants someone hanging around in the gents trying to solicit money for turning on taps'), 'Make Paul McCartney's Pipes of Peace The National Anthem' and 'Reduce Freddos Chocolate Bars to 10p' – 'because they are now 65p which is absolutely ridiculous'. Incidentally, they received 17 signatures between them, 14 of which were from people who clearly like Freddos.

Now, spurious petitions aside, there are issues which receive the support of thousands. But, although 40,000 signatures may seem a substantial amount, the government has now stated that an e-petition will only be discussed by a back bench

committee if it has received over 100,000 signatures. Only twenty have reached that mark. To date, 32,230 e-petitions have been launched at [epetitions.direct.gov.uk](http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk) (another 27,599 motions have also been rejected for 'failing to meet the terms and conditions') with very little actual effect. But, if the e-petition system was supposed to work, they wouldn't allow it, would they?

On a slightly different note, the Registration of Political Parties (Prohibited Words and Expressions) (Amendment) Order 2005 stipulates that no political party can be registered in the UK under the name 'None Of The Above' or derivatives thereof (such as NOTA). There is, however, nothing to stop an individual from renaming themselves with said forbidden phrase. In the 2010 general election, former light welterweight champion Terry Marsh stood as an independent candidate in the constituency of South Basildon and East Thurrock after changing his name by deed poll to 'None Of The Above X', placing him at the bottom of the ballot paper. It wasn't a particular successful ploy as 'Mr X' polled just 0.3% of the vote, the lowest of any candidate standing.

Although I personally feel that none of the particular candidates in my area are worth my vote, I'm not prepared to simply spoil the ballot paper. But I have recently received an email from solicitor and motorcyclist, Mark-Anthony Conti (who has seen the law from both sides; before qualifying, he launched a ground-breaking law suit following a bike accident in 1993 in which he was seriously



injured and he has also worked on the KillSpills campaign). The upshot of Mr Conti's email is that, despite popular perception, you do not have to live in the constituency in which you are registered to vote. You can legally register anywhere in the country, although, of course, you have to have a residential address in that electoral area (and, technically, be able to show 'a considerable degree of permanency' – for example, students can register at two addresses). You can, however, only vote once or you will face a £5,000 fine.

If you can, if challenged, prove that 'considerable degree of permanency', you could legally be registered to vote in every single constituency in the UK should you so wished, as long as you only vote in one. You can also choose to vote by postal vote without giving a

reason as to why you need one. It makes me think that perhaps this loophole has been used in certain elections for years...

Say, for example, MAG targeted a group of MPs it wanted to oust (and who aren't members, of course), including the Prime Minister or members of his cabinet. Everyone could register to vote in Witney (David Cameron's seat) and vote by post. If 22,741 people—one more than his majority—all did the same thing, just imagine what could happen. And it's perfectly legal.

**Mitch** – or John Mitchell to give him his proper name – has been a MAG member since 1999 and is currently serving his second term as National Chairman. He's an avid campaigner, who would love for MAG to have the same number of members as the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), of which he's also a member). He's also the owner of the greenest Speed Triple out there – allegedly!

**THE GOVERNMENT HAS STATED THAT AN E-PETITION WILL ONLY BE DISCUSSED BY A BACK BENCH COMMITTEE IF IT HAS RECEIVED OVER 100,000 SIGNATURES**



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# TAIL PIECE

## NABD Latest News



### Sponsor a Barrel of Ale

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### AUTUMN NABD'NESS RALLY CANCELLED:

It is with great regret that the Autumn Nabd'ness Rally, to be held on 11-13 September 2015, has been cancelled. Due to an unacceptable breakdown in the servicing of the toilets at the 2014 event, we no longer have any faith in the toilet supplier and, that also happens to be the site owner. We have had no alternative but to move the event to another site.

Establishing the new site, applying for a new licence for the event, along with many other considerations, involve time and effort, so the NABD Committee has reluctantly agreed to postpone the next Autumn Nabd'ness rally until September 2016 to allow us to once again put on an event of the highest quality. On behalf of the Trustees of the NABD, I offer our apologies to anybody who has been inconvenienced by this unavoidable decision.

As ever, you can find in-depth information on the work of the NABD by reading back issues of the quarterly Open House magazine at [openhousemagazine.co.uk](http://openhousemagazine.co.uk). For further information about the NABD, ring 0844 415 4849 or see [www.nabd.org.uk](http://www.nabd.org.uk). You can also find the NABD on Facebook by searching 'National Association for Bikers with a Disability'.

**H**ere is just the briefest of glimpses into the recent activities of the NABD. Over the past four months, the National Committee of the NABD has awarded grants totalling £25,821 to help disabled riders to have bikes and/or trikes professionally adapted to suit their needs. In other words, 33 disabled people have been given the assistance they need to adapt motorcycles, trikes and/or sidecar outfits to suit their needs. That's 33 more people who will enjoy the freedom and independence of motorcycling because other bikers know how much it matters!

This level of help for disabled bikers is only possible with the help of donations from a wide variety of supporters. To give you an idea of the eclectic nature of those supporters, here's a list of notable donations received over the same period of time:

- £220:** Police Motorcycle Club of Northern Ireland
- £210:** Cernunnos MCC
- £2,000:** Roughley's Bikeshow 2014 £714—To Hull and Back (Sharon Hannington)
- £3,889:** 1066 MCC
- £200:** Tan Hill Inn Motorbike Club
- £3,028:** Shitesbags MCC (The 'Little Tiddler' Charity Malarkey)
- £285.50:** Cream Tea Run 2014 (Rock Hen Coop)
- £500:** Rotary Club of Calne
- £495:** Weardale & District Motor Club
- £1,138:** Solent Cougars Scooter Club
- £2,000:** Hoggin' the Bridge 2014
- £350:** Avernus MCC (Underworld Rally 2014)

**£320:** In memory of T Thomas, Essex

**£725:** MZ Riders Club

**£805:** Picton Entertainment (Rally in the Woods 2014)

This list includes donations of £200 or more received between 20 October 2014 and 11 February 2015. Of course, many smaller donations were made in that period and every one of them is greatly valued. Without the support of good-hearted folk, the freedom and independence of motorcycling would remain an unattainable dream for so many disabled people.

### You've Been Nabbed 24 (May 8–10)

This rally is an iconic event (see advert elsewhere in this issue) that is widely regarded as the best value event on the UK bike scene. This year's event will feature 26 live bands over three stages, the 100% Biker Bike & Trike show, a huge stand-up comedy show, 60-plus real ales and ciders, a wide range of canned beers, wines and spirits, loads of trade stalls, three discos, children's entertainment, accessible facilities, hot showers and the very best company you could wish for!

Tickets booked before 2 May 2015 will cost £25, while they will be £30 on the gate. What some people don't seem to realise is that NABD events attract all types of bikers, not just those who are disabled and NABD members, but folk who know what a good party we can throw! This year we have removed our restrictions on people attending by car in a bid to stop people parking illegally in the local area and walking into the event.

**Rick Hulse** is the chairman of the NABD, the National Association of Bikers with a Disability, and the front man for the Smacked Arse Comedy Roadshow and is no mean comedian himself. He's been writing columns for biker magazines for years now under a variety of pseudonyms and we here at Biker are proud to have him here writing as himself.

**The NABD Committee has reluctantly agreed to postpone the next Autumn Nabd'ness rally until September 2016 to ensure the highest quality event**





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